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COMPANIONS OF MY SOLITUDE

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LONDON
WILLIAM PICKERING
1851

COMPANIONS OF MY SOLITUDE.

CHAPTER I.

WHEN in the country, I live much alone: and, as I wander over downs and commons and through lanes with lofty hedges, many thoughts come into my mind. I find too the ſame ones come again and again, and are ſpiritual companions. At times they inſiſt upon being with me, and are reſolutely intruſive. I think I will deſcribe them, that ſo I may have more maſtery over them. Inſtead of ſuffering them to haunt me as vague faces and half-faſhioned reſemblances, I will make them into diſtinct pic-

tures, which I can give away, or hang up in my room, turning them, if I pleaſe, with their faces to the wall; and in ſhort be free to do what I like with them.

Elleſmere will then be able to deride them at his pleaſure; and ſo they will go through the alembic of ſarcaſm: Dunsford will have ſomething more to approve, or rebuke; Lucy ſomething more to love, or to hate. Even my dogs and my trees will be the better for this work, as when it is done, they will, perhaps, have a more diſengaged attention from me. Faithful, ſteadfaſt creatures, both dogs and trees, how eaſy and charming is your converſe with me compared with the eager, excluſive, anxious way in which the creations of my own brain, who at leaſt ſhould have ſome filial love and reſpect for me, inſiſt upon my attention.

It was a thoroughly Engliſh day to-day, ſombre and quiet, the ſky coming cloſe to the earth, and everything ſeeming to be of one colour. I wandered over the downs, not heeding much which way I went, and driven by one ſet of thoughts which of late have had great hold upon me.

I think often of the hopes of the race here, of what is to become of our weſtern civilization, and what can be made of it. Others may purſue ſcience or art, and I long to do ſo too; but I cannot help thinking of the ſtate and fortunes of large maſſes of mankind, and hoping that thought may do ſomething for them. After all my cogitations, my mind generally returns to one thing, the education of the people. For want of general cultivation how much individual excellence is crippled. Of what avail, for example, is it for any one of us to have ſurmounted any ſocial terror, or any ſuperſtition, while his neighbours lie ſunk in it. His conduct in reference to them becomes a conſtant care and burden.

Meditating upon general improvement, I often think a great deal about the climate in theſe parts of the world; and I ſee that without much huſbandry of our means and reſources, it is difficult for us to be anything but low barbarians. The difficulty of living at all in a cold, damp, deſtructive climate is great. Socrates went about with very ſcanty clothing, and men praiſe his wiſdom in caring ſo little

for the goods of this life. He ate ſparingly, and of mean food. That is not the way, I ſuſpect, that we can make a philoſopher here. There are people who would deride one for ſaying this, and would contend that it gives too much weight to worldly things. But I ſuſpect they are miſled by notions borrowed from Eaſtern climates. Here we muſt make prudence one of the ſubſtantial virtues.

One thing though I ſee, and that is, that there is a quantity of miſplaced labour, of labour which does not go in ſtern conteſt with the rugged world around us, in the endeavour to compel Nature to give us our birthright, but in fighting with "ſtrong deluſions" of all kinds, or rather in putting up obſtacles which we laboriouſly knock down again, in making Chineſe mazes between us and objects we have daily need of, and where we ſhould have only the ſhorteſt poſſible line to go. As I have ſaid elſewhere, half the labour of the world is pure loſs—the work of Siſyphus rolling up ſtones to come down again inevitably.

Law, for example, what a loſs is there; of time, of heart, of love, of leiſure! There are good men whoſe minds are ſet upon im-

proving the law; but I doubt whether any of them are prepared to go far enough. Here again we muſt hope moſt from general improvement of the people. Perhaps though ſome one great genius will do ſomething for us. I have often fancied that a man might play the part of Brutus in the law. He might ſimulate madneſs in order to enſure freedom. He might make himſelf a great lawyer, riſe to eminence in the profeſſion, and then turn round and ſay, "I am not going to enjoy this high ſeat and dignity; but intend henceforward to be an advocate for the people of this country againſt the myriad oppreſſions and vexations of the law. No Chancellorſhips or Chief-Juſticeſhips for me. I have only pretended to be this ſlave in order that you ſhould not ſay that I am an untried and unpractical man—that I do not underſtand your myſteries."

This of courſe is not the dramatic way in which ſuch a thing would be done. But there is greatneſs enough in the world for it to be done. If no lawyer riſes up to fill the place which my imagination has aſſigned for him, we muſt hope that Stateſmen will do ſomething for us in this matter, that they will eventually

protect us (though, hitherto, they never have done ſo) from lawyers.

There are many things done now in the law at great expenſe by private individuals which ought to be done for all by officers of the State. It is as if each individual had to make a road for himſelf whenever he went out, inſtead of uſing the King's highway.

Many of the worſt things in the profeſſion take place low down in it. I am not ſure that I would not try the plan of having public notaries with very extenſive functions, ſubjecting them to official control. What exclamations about freedom we ſhould hear, I dare ſay, if any large meaſure of this kind were propoſed; which exclamations and their conſequences have long been in my mind, a chief obſtacle to our poſſeſſing the reality of freedom. What difference is it whether I am a ſlave to my lawyer, or ſubject indirectly to more official control in the changing of my property. I do not know a meaner and ſadder portion of a man's exiſtence, or one more likely to be full of impatient ſorrow, than that which he ſpends in waiting at the offices of lawyers.

It is to be obſerved that all ſatire falls ſhort

when aimed againſt the practices in the Law. No man can imagine, not Swift himſelf, things more ſhameful, abſurd and groteſque than the things which do take place daily in the Law. Satire becomes merely narrative. A modern noveliſt depicts a man ruined by a legacy of a thouſand pounds, and ſleeping under a four-legged table becauſe it reminded him of the days when he uſed to ſleep in a four-poſt bed. This laſt touch about the bed is humorous, but the ſubſtance of the ſtory is dry narrative only.

Theſe evils are not of yeſterday, or of this Country only: I obſerve that the firſt Spaniſh coloniſts in America write home to the Government begging them not to allow lawyers to come to the colony.

At the ſame time, we muſt not forget how many of the evils attributed ſolely to the proceedings of lawyers, reſult from the want of knowledge of buſineſs in the world in general, and its inaptneſs for buſineſs, the anxiety to arrange more and for longer time than is wiſe or poſſible, and the occaſional truſting of affairs to women, who in our country are brought up to be utterly incompetent to the management of

affairs. Still, with all theſe allowances, and taking care to admit, as we muſt, if we have any fairneſs, that notwithſtanding the element of chicanery and perverſe ſmall-mindedneſs in which they are involved, there are many admirable and very high-minded men to be found in all grades of the law, (perhaps a more curious inſtance of the power of the human being to maintain its ſtructure unimpaired in the midſt of a hoſtile element, than that a man ſhould be able to abide in a heated oven) admitting all theſe extenuating circumſtances, we muſt nevertheleſs declare, as I ſet out by ſaying, that Law affords a notable example of loſs of time, of heart, of love, of leiſure.*

Well, then, as another inſtance of miſplaced labour, I ſuppoſe we muſt take a good deal of what goes on in ſchools and colleges, and, indeed, in parliaments and other aſſemblages of

* Many of the adjuncts and circumſtances of the Law are calculated to maintain it as a myſtery: I allude to the uncouth form and ſize of deeds, the antiquated words, the unuſual character of hand-writing. Phyſicians' preſcriptions may have a better effect for being expreſſed myſteriouſly, but legal matters cannot ſurely be made too clear, even in the mereſt minutiæ.

men, not to ſpeak of the wider waſte of means and labour which prevails in all phyſical works ſuch as buildings, furniture, decorations—and not merely waſte but obſtruction, ſo that if there were a good angel attendant on the human race, with power to act on earth, it would deſtroy as faſt as made a conſiderable portion of men's productions as the kindeſt thing which could be done for man and the beſt inſtruction for him.

The truth is, we muſt conſiderably addreſs ourſelves to cope with Nature. Here again, too, we come to the want of more extended and general cultivation, for otherwiſe we cannot fully enjoy or profit by ſcientific diſcovery. At preſent a man in a civilized country is ſurrounded by things which are greater than he is; he does not underſtand them, cannot regulate them, cannot mend them.

This ignorance proceeds in ſome reſpects from diviſion of labour. A man knows how to make a pin's head admirably, but is afraid to handle or give an opinion upon things which he has not daily knowledge of. This applies not only to phyſical things, but to law, church, ſtate, and the arts and ſciences generally.

After all, the advancement of the world depends upon the uſe of ſmall balances of advantage over diſadvantage, for there is compenſation everywhere and in everything. No one diſcovery reſuſcitates the world: certainly no phyſical one. Each new good thought, or word, or deed, brings its ſhadow with it; and, as I have juſt ſaid, it is upon the ſmall balances of gain that we get on at all. Often too this occurs indirectly, as when moral gains give phyſical gains, and theſe again give room for further moral and intellectual culture.

Frequently it ſeems as if the faculties of man were not quite adequate as yet to his ſituation. This is perhaps more to be ſeen in contemplating individuals, than in looking at mankind in general. The individual ſeems the ſport of circumſtance. When Napoleon invaded Ruſſia, (the proximate cauſe of his downfal) though doubtleſs there were very adverſe and unfortunate circumſtances attendant upon that invaſion, yet, upon the whole, it gave a good opportunity for working out the errors of the man's mind and ſyſtem. The circumſtances were not unfair, as we may ſay, againſt him. Moſt proſperous men, perhaps I ſhould ſay

moſt men, have in the courſe of their lives their campaign in Ruſſia—when they ſtrain their fortune to the uttermoſt, and often it breaks under them. I did not mean anything like this when I ſaid that the individual ſeems the ſport of circumſtance. Neither did I mean that ſmall continuous faults and miſdoings have conſiderable effect upon a man, ſuch as the errors and vices of youth, which are ſilently put down to a man from day to day, like his reckoning at an inn. But I alluded to thoſe very unfortunate concurrences of circumſtances, which moſt men's lives will tell them of, where a man from ſome ſmall error or omiſſion, from ſome ſlight careleſſneſs, or overtruſt, in thoughtleſs innocence or inexperience, gets entangled in a web of adverſe circumſtances which will be company for him on ſleepleſs nights and anxious days throughout a large part of his life. Were ſucceſs in life (morally or phyſically) the main object here, it certainly would ſeem as if a little more faculty in man were ſadly needed. A ſimilar thing occurs often to the body, when a man, from ſome ſmall miſchance or overſight, lays the beginning of a diſeaſe which ſhall depreſs and enfeeble him

while he ſojourns upon earth. And it ſeems, when he looks back, as if ſuch a little thing would have ſaved him: if he had not croſſed over the road, if he had not gone to ſee his friend on that particular day, if the duſt had not been ſo unpleaſant on that occaſion, the whole courſe of his life would have been different. Living, as we do, in the midſt of ſtern gigantic Laws which cruſh every thing down that comes in their way, which know no excuſes, admit of no ſmall errors, never ſend a man back to learn his leſſon and try him again, but are as inexorable as Fate—living I ſay with ſuch creatures about us (unſeen too for the moſt part) it does ſeem as if the faculties of man were hardly as yet adequate to his ſituation here.

Such conſiderations as the above tend to charity and humility; and they point alſo to the exiſtence of a future ſtate.

As regards charity, for example, a man might extend to others the ineffable tenderneſs which he has for ſome of his own ſins and errors, becauſe he knows the whole hiſtory of them; and though, taken at a particular point, they

appear very large and very black, he knew them in their early days when they were playfellows inſtead of tyrant demons. There are others which he cannot ſo well ſmooth over, becauſe he knows that in their caſe inward proclivity coincided with outward temptation; and, if he is a juſt man, he is well aware that if he had not erred here, he would have erred there; that experience, even at famine price, was neceſſary for him in thoſe matters. But, in conſidering the miſdoings and misfortunes of others, he may as well begin at leaſt by thinking that they are of the claſs which he has found from his own experience to contain a larger amount of what we call ill-fortune than of anything like evil diſpoſition. For time and chance, ſays the Preacher, happen to all men.

Thus I thought in my walk this dull and dreary afternoon, till the riſing of the moon and the return from ſchool of the children with their ſatchels coming over the down warned me, too, that it was time to return home: and ſo, trying not to think any more of theſe things, I looked at the bare beech trees, ſtill beautiful, and the dull ſheep-ponds ſcattered here and there, and thought that the

country even in winter and in theſe northern regions, like a great man in adverſity and juſt diſgrace, was ſtill to be looked at with hopeful tenderneſs, even if, in the man's caſe, there muſt alſo be ſomewhat of reſpectful condemnation. As I neared home I comforted myſelf, too, by thinking that the inhabitants of ſunnier climes do not know how winning and joyful is the look of the chimney-tops of our homes in the midſt of what to them would ſeem moſt deſolate and dreary.

CHAPTER II.

I SUPPOSE it has happened to moſt men who obſerve their thoughts at all, to notice how ſome expreſſion returns again and again in the courſe of their meditations, or, indeed, of their buſineſs, forming as it were a refrain to all they think, or do, for any given day. Sometimes, too, this refrain has no particular concern with the thought or buſineſs of the day; but ſeems as if it belonged to ſome under-current of thought and feeling. This at leaſt is what I experienced to-day myſelf, being haunted by a bit of old Spaniſh poetry, which obtruded itſelf, ſometimes inopportunely, ſometimes not ſo, in the midſt of all my work or play. The words were theſe.

" Quan preſto ſe va el placer,
Como deſpues de acordado
Da dolor;

Como, al nueſtro parecer,
Qualquiera tiempo paſado
Fué mejor.

How quickly paſſes pleaſure away,
How after being granted
It gives pain;
How in our opinion
Any paſt time
Was better (than that we paſſed in pleaſure).

It was not that I agreed with the ſentiment, except as applied to vicious pleaſure, being rather of Sydney Smith's mind, that the remembrance of paſt pleaſure is preſent pleaſure; but I ſuppoſe the words chimed in with reflections on the paſt which formed the under current of my thoughts, as I went through the wood of beeches which bounded my walk today.

A critique had juſt been ſent me of ſome literary production, in which the reviewer was very gracious in noticing the calmneſs and moderation of the author. "Ah my friend," thought I to myſelf, "how differently you would write if you did but know the man as I do, and were aware what a fierce fellow he is with all his outward ſmoothneſs, hardly ruling at times thoughts which are anything but calm

and moderate, yet ſtruggling to be juſt, and knowing that violence is always loſs!"

From that I went on to conſider how intenſe is the lonelineſs for the moſt part of any man who endeavours to think—like the Nile wandering on through a deſert Country, with no tributary ſtreams to cheer and aid it, and to be loſt in ſympathy with its main current. In politics, for example, ſuch a man will have too affectionate a regard for the people to be a democrat; he would as ſoon leave his own children without guidance: and, on the other hand, he will have too great a regard for merit and fitneſs to be an ariſtocrat. He will find no one plank to walk up and down conſiſtently; and will be always looking beyond meaſures which ſatisfy other men; and ſeeing perhaps that as regards politics themſelves, greater things are to be done out of them than in them.

I was ſilent in thought for a moment, and then my refrain came back again—

"Qualquiera tiempo paſado
Fué mejor."

And in a moment I went back, not to the pleaſures, but to the ambitious hopes and projects

of youth. And when a man does reflect upon the ambitions which are as characteriſtic of that period of life as reckleſs courage or elaſtic ſtep, and finds that at each ſtage of his journey ſince, ſome hope has dropped off as too burdenſome, or too romantic, till at laſt it is enough for him to carry only himſelf at all upright in this troubleſome world—what thoughts come back upon him! How he meditates upon his own errors and ſhortcomings, and ſees that he has had not only the hardneſs, oilineſs, and imperturbability, of the world to contend with; but that he himſelf has generally been his worſt antagoniſt.

In this mood, I might have thrown myſelf upon the mound under a great beech tree that was near, the king of the woods, and uttered many lamentations: but, inſtead of doing anything of the kind, I walked ſedately by it; for, as we go on in life, we find we cannot afford excitement, and we learn to be parſimonious in our emotions. Again I muttered,

"Qualquiera tiempo paſado
Fué mejor."

And I threw forward theſe words into the future, as if I were already blaming any tendency to unneceſſary emotion.

I entered now into another vein of thought, conſidering that kind Nature would not allow a man to be ſo very wiſe, nor for the ſake of any good he might do to others, permit him to forfeit the benefit he muſt derive from his own errors, failures, and ſhortcomings. You may mean well, ſhe ſays, and you might expect that I ſhould give you extraordinary furtherance, and not ſuffer you to be plagued with drawbacks and errors of your own, that ſo you might do your work undiſturbed: but I love you too well for that. I ſacrifice no one child for the benefit of the reſt. You all muſt learn humility.

I felt the truth of theſe words, and thereupon gave myſelf up to more cheerful thoughts. How much cheerfulneſs there is by the way in humility. I liſtened to the cuckoo in the woods, hearing his tireſome but welcome noiſe for the firſt time in the year, and I looked out for the wild flowers that were juſt beginning to ſhow themſelves, and thought that, from the names of flowers, it is evident that, in former days, poets and ſcholars muſt have lived in the country and looked well at Nature. Elſe how came all theſe pictureſque and poetical names, "love in idleneſs," "Venus's looking-glaſs," and ſuch like.

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muſt inſert ſomething of his own which is clearly wrong. This I thought is the way of moſt tranſlation, and I might add, of moſt portrait-painting and nearly all criticiſm. And it occurred to me that the written hiſtory of the world was very like the prints of this freſco—namely, a clear account, a good deal of it utterly wrong, of what at firſt hand is conſiderably obliterated, and which, except in minds of the higheſt power of imagination, to be a clear conception can hardly be a juſt one.

And, then, carrying my application ſtill further to the moſt important of all hiſtories, I thought how the ſimple majeſty of the original tranſaction had probably ſuffered a like miſconception, from the fading of the material narrative, and ſtill more from the weak inventions of thoſe who could not repreſent accurately, and were impatient of any dimneſs (to their eyes) in the divine original.

I often fancy how I ſhould like to direct the intellectual efforts of men: and, if I had the power, how frequently I ſhould direct them to thoſe great ſubjects in metaphyſics and theology which now men ſhun.

What patient labour and what intellectual power is often beſtowed in coming to a deciſion on any cauſe which involves much worldly property. Might there not be ſome great hearing of any of the intellectual and ſpiritual difficulties which beſet the paths of all thoughtful men in the preſent age?

Church queſtions, for example, ſeem to require a vaſt inveſtigation. As it is, a book or pamphlet is put forward on one ſide, then another on the other ſide, and ſomehow the oppoſing facts and arguments ſeldom come into each other's preſence. And thus truth ſuſtains great loſs.

My own opinion is, if I can venture to ſay that I have an opinion, that what we ought to ſeek for is a church of the utmoſt width of doctrine, and with the moſt beautiful expreſſion that can be deviſed for that doctrine—the moſt beautiful expreſſion, I mean, in words, in deeds, in ſculpture and in ſacred ſong; which ſhould have a ſimple eaſy grandeur in its proceedings that ſhould pleaſe the elevated and poetical mind, charm the poor, and yet not lie open to juſt cavilling on the part of thoſe ſomewhat hard, intellectual worſhippers who muſt have a

reaſon for everything; which ſhould have vitality and growth in it; and which ſhould attract and not repel thoſe who love truth better than any creature.

Pondering theſe things in the ſilence of the downs, I at laſt neared home; and found that the reſult of all my thoughts was that any would-be teacher muſt be contented and humble, or try to be ſo, in his efforts of any kind; and that if the great queſtions can hardly be determined by man (divided too as he is from his brother in all ways) he muſt ſtill try and do what he can on lower levels, hoping ever for more inſight, and looking forward to the knowledge which may be gained by death.

CHAPTER III.

TO-DAY, as the weather was cold and boiſterous, I could only walk under ſhelter of the yew hedge in my garden, which ſome gracious predeceſſor (all honour to him!) planted to keep off the dire north-weſt winds, and which, I fear, unleſs he was a very hardy plant himſelf, he did not live long enough to profit much by. Being ſo near home, my thoughts naturally took a domeſtic turn; and I vexed myſelf by thinking that I had received no letter from my little boy. This was owing to the new poſt-office regulations which did not allow letters to go out from country places, or be delivered at ſuch places, on a Sunday. Oh thoſe wicked Borgias, ſaid I to myſelf, how much we have to blame them for! To be ſure, I know pretty well what the letter would be.

" I hope you are well papa and I ſend you
" my love and I have got a kite and uncle
" George's dog is very fierce. His name is
" Nero which was a roman emperor nearly
" quite white only he has got two black ſpots
" juſt over his noſe And I ſend my love to
" mamma and the children and I am your own
" little boy and affectionate ſon,

" Leonard Milverton."

Not a very important, certainly not a very artiſtic, production this letter, but ſtill it has its intereſt for the fooliſh paternal mind, and I ſhould like to have received it to-day. It is greatly owing to thoſe Borgias that I have not received this letter. Moſt of my neighbours imagine that their little petitions were the ſole cauſe of theſe Poſt-office regulations; but I beg to go ſomewhat further back, and I come to Pope Alexander the Sixth, and lay a great deal of the blame on him. The pendulous folly of mankind oſcillates as far in this direction as it has come from that; and an abſurd Puritan is only a correlative to a wicked Pope.

From ſuch reflections, I fell to conſidering

Puritaniſm generally, and I am afraid I came to a different concluſion from that which would have been popular at any of the late public meetings; but then I conſole myſelf by an aphoriſm of Elleſmere's, who is wont to remark, "How exactly proportioned to a man's ignorance of the ſubject is the noiſe he makes about it at a public meeting." Knowledge brings doubts and exceptions and limitations which, though occaſionally ſome aids to truth, are all hindrances to vigorous ſtatement.

But to go back to what I thought about Puritaniſm—for I endeavoured to methodize my thoughts, and the following is the courſe they took.

What are the objects of life, as far as regards this world? Its firſt wants, I anſwer, namely food and raiment. What beſides? Marrying and the rearing of children; and, in general, the cultivation of the affections. So far Puritans would agree with us.

But ſuppoſe all theſe things to be tempered with gaiety and feſtivity: what element of wickedneſs has *neceſſarily* entered? None that I can perceive. Self-indulgence takes many forms; and we ſhould bear in mind that there

may be a ſullen ſenſuality as well as a gay one.

But the truth is, there is a ſecret belief amongſt ſome men that God is diſpleaſed with man's happineſs; and in conſequence they ſlink about creation, aſhamed and afraid to enjoy any thing.

They anſwer, we do not object to rational pleaſures.

But who, my good people, ſhall exactly define rational pleaſures? You are pleaſed with a flower; to cultivate flowers is what you call a rational pleaſure: there are people, however, to whom a flower is ſomewhat inſipid, but they perhaps dote upon muſic, which, however, is unfortunately not one of your rational pleaſures —chiefly, as I believe, becauſe it is mainly a ſocial one. Why is there any thing *neceſſarily* wrong in ſocial pleaſures? Certainly ſome of the moſt dangerous vices, ſuch as pride, are found to flouriſh in ſolitude with more vigour than in ſociety: and a man may be deadly avaricious who has never even gone out to a tea-party.

Once I happened to overhear a dialogue ſomewhat ſimilar to that which Charles Lamb, perhaps, only feigned to hear. I was travelling

in a railway carriage with a moſt preciſe-looking formal perſon, the Arch-Quaker, if there be ſuch a perſon. His countenance was very noble, or rather had been ſo, before it was frozen up. He ſaid nothing: I felt a great reſpect for him. At laſt his mouth opened. I liſtened with attention: I had hitherto lived with fooliſh, gad-about, dinner-eating, dancing people: now I was going to hear the words of retired wiſdom; when he thus addreſſed his young daughter ſitting oppoſite, "Haſt thee heard how Southamptons went lately?" (in thoſe days South-weſtern Railway ſhares were called Southamptons) and ſhe replied, with like gravity, giving him ſome information that ſhe had picked up about Southamptons yeſterday evening.

I leant back rather ſickened as I thought what was probably the daily talk and the daily thoughts in that family, from which I conjectured all amuſement was baniſhed ſave that connected with intenſe money-getting.

Well, but exclaims the advocate of Puritaniſm, I do not admit that my clients, on abjuring the pleaſures of this world, fall into pride, or ſullen ſenſuality, or intenſe money-getting,

They only ſecure to themſelves more time for works of charity and for the love of God.

You are an adroit advocate, and are careful, by not puſhing your caſe too far, to give me the leaſt poſſible room for reply. They ſecure to themſelves more time for theſe good works you ſay. Do they do them? But the truth is, in order to meet your remark and to extract the good there is in it, I muſt begin by ſaying that Puritaniſm, as far as it is an abnegation of ſelf, is good, or may be ſo. But this is moſt ſurely the caſe, when it turns its ſufferings and privations to utility. It has always appeared to me that there is ſo much to be done in this world, that all ſelf-inflicted ſuffering which cannot be turned to good account for others, is a loſs—a loſs, if you may ſo expreſs it, to the ſpiritual world.

The Puritaniſm which I object to is that which avoids ſome pleaſure, and exhauſts in injurious comment and attack upon other people the leiſure and force of mind it has gained by its abſtinence from the pleaſure.

I can underſtand and ſympathize with the man who ſays "I enjoy feſtivity, but I cannot go to the feaſt I am bidden to to-night, for there are ſick people who muſt be firſt attended

to." But I do not love the man who ſtays away from the feaſt and employs his leiſure in delivering a ſour diſcourſe on the wickedneſs of the others who are invited to the feaſt, and who go to it.

Moreover this cenſoriouſneſs is not only a ſin, but the inventor of many ſins. Indeed the manufacture of ſins is ſo eaſy a manufacture, that I am convinced men could readily be perſuaded that it was wicked to uſe the left leg as much as the right; whole congregations would only permit themſelves to hop; and, what is more to our preſent point, would conſider that, when they walked in the ordinary faſhion, they were committing a deadly ſin. Now I ſhould not think that the man who were to invent this ſin would be a benefactor to the human race.

You often hear in a town, or village, a bit of domeſtic hiſtory which ſeems at firſt to militate againſt what I have been ſaying, but is in reality very conſiſtent with it. The ſtory is of ſome poor man, and is apt to run thus. He began to frequent the alehouſe; he ſought out amuſements; there was a neighbouring fair where he firſt ſhowed his quarrelſome diſpoſi-

tion; then came worſe things; and now here he is in priſon. Yes, I ſhould reply, he frequented with a ſtealthy ſhame thoſe places which you, who would ignore all amuſement, have ſuffered to be moſt coarſe and demoralizing. All along he had an exaggerated notion of the blame that he was juſtly liable to from his firſt ſteps in the downward path: the truth unfortunately is, that you go a long way to make a ſmall error into a ſin, when you miſcall it ſo. I would not, therefore, have a Clergyman talk of the alehouſe as if it were the pit of Acheron. On the contrary, I would have him acknowledge that, conſidering the warmth and cheerfulneſs to be found in the ſanded parlour of the village inn, it is very natural that men ſhould be apt to frequent it. I would have him, however, go on to ſhow what frequenting the alehouſe moſtly leads to, and how the labourer's home might be made to rival the alehouſe: and I would have him help to make it ſo, or, in ſome way to provide ſome ſubſtitute for the alehouſe.

The evils of competition are very conſiderable, and many people in theſe times hold up competition as the great monſter evil of the age. I do not know how that may be; but I

am ſure that the competition there is in the way of puritanical demonſtration is very injurious to ſincerity. This competition is the child of fear. A is afraid that his neighbour B will not think well of him, becauſe he (A) does or permits ſomething which C, another neighbour, will not allow in his houſe. Surely this is little elſe than mere man-worſhip. It puts one in mind of the ſtory of that congregation of the Church of England who begged their Clergyman to give them longer ſermons—not that they were fond of long diſcourſes—but that they might not always be out of church before ſome neighbouring congregation of Weſleyans or Independents.

Returning to the imaginary advocate for Puritaniſm who ſaid that it ſecured more time for works of charity and for the love of God.

I do not know whether other people's obſervation will tally with mine; but, as far as I have obſerved, it appears to me that charity requires the ſterneſt labour and the moſt anxious thought; that, in ſhort, it is one of the moſt difficult things in the world, and is not altogether a matter for leiſure hours. This remark applies to the more ſerious functions of

charity. But, we muſt remember, that the whole of charity is not compriſed in carrying about gifts to one another, or, to ſpeak more generally, in remedying the material evils ſuffered by thoſe around us; elſe life would indeed be a dreary affair; but there are exquiſite little charities to be performed in reference to ſocial pleaſures.

Then, as to the love of God, I do not venture to ſay much upon ſo ſolemn a theme; but it does occur to me, that we ſhould talk and think very humbly about our capacity in matters ſo much above us. At any rate I do not ſee why the love of God ſhould withdraw us largely from our fellow-man. That love we believe was greateſt in Him who graced with his preſence the marriage feaſt at Cana in Galilee; who was never known to ſhun or to ignore the exiſtence of the vicious; and to whom, more than to all other teachers, the hypocrite ſeems to have been particularly odious.

But there is another very important conſideration to be weighed by thoſe who are fearful of encouraging amuſements, eſpecially amongſt their poorer brethren. What are the generality of people to do, or to think of, for a

conſiderable portion of each day, if they are not allowed to buſy themſelves with ſome form of recreation? Here is this infinite creature, man, who looks before and after, whoſe ſwiftneſs of thought is ſuch, even among the dulleſt of the ſpecies, as would perhaps aſtoniſh the brighteſt, who are apt to imagine that none think but themſelves; and you fancy that he can be quite contented with providing warmth and food for himſelf and thoſe he has to love and cheriſh. Food and warmth! content with that! not he: and we ſhould greatly deſpiſe him if he could be. Why is it that in all ages ſmall towns and remote villages have foſtered little malignities of all kinds? The true anſwer is, that people will backbite one another to any extent rather than not be amuſed. Nay, ſo ſtrong is this deſire for ſomething to go on that may break the monotony of life, that people, not otherwiſe ill-natured, are pleaſed with the misfortune of their neighbours, ſolely becauſe it gives ſomething to think of, ſomething to talk about. They imagine how the principal actors and ſufferers concerned in the misfortune will bear it; what they will do; how they will look: and ſo the dull byſtander forms a ſort of drama for himſelf. He would, perhaps, be told that

it is wicked for him to go to ſuch an entertainment: he makes one out for himſelf, not always innocently.

You hear Clergymen in country pariſhes denouncing the ill-nature of their pariſhioners: it is in vain: the better ſort of men try to act up to what they are told; but really it is ſo dull in the pariſh, that a bit of ſcandal is welcome to the heart. Theſe poor people have nothing to think about; nature ſhows them comparatively little, as art and ſcience have not taught them to look behind the ſcenes, or even at the ſcenes; literature they know nothing of; they cannot have goſſip about the men of the paſt (which is the moſt innocent kind of goſſip) in other words, read and diſcuſs hiſtory; they have no delicate handiwork to amuſe them; in ſhort, talk they muſt, and talk they will, about their neighbours, whoſe goings-on are a perpetual puppet-ſhow to them.

But, to ſpeak more gravely, man, even the moſt ſluggiſh-minded man, craves amuſement of ſome kind; and his wiſer and more powerful brethren will ſhow their wiſdom, or their want of it, in the amuſements they contrive for him.

We need not be afraid that in England any art or innocent amuſement will be cultivated too

much. The genius of the people, though kindly, is ſevere. And that is why there is ſo much leſs danger of their being injured, if any one is, by recreation. Cyrus kept the Lydians tame, we are told, by allowing them to cultivate muſic; the Greeks were perhaps prevented from becoming dominant by a cultivation of many arts; but the Anglo-Saxons, like the Romans, can afford to cultivate art and recreations of all kinds. Such purſuits will not tame them too much. To contend, occaſionally, againſt the bent of the genius, or the circumſtances, of a people, is one of the great arts of ſtateſmanſhip. The ſame thing which is to be dreaded in one place is to be cultivated in another: here a poiſon, there an antidote.

The above is what I thought in reference to Puritaniſm during my walk this evening: then by a not uneaſy diverſion of mind, I turned to another branch of ſmall perſecutions—ſmall do I call them? perhaps they are the greateſt that are endured, certainly the moſt vexatious. I mean all that is perpetrated by the tyranny of the weak.

This is a moſt fertile ſubject and has been nearly neglected. Weak is a relative term:

whenever two people meet, one is comparatively weak and the other ſtrong; the relation between them is often ſuppoſed to imply this. Taking ſociety in general, there is a certain weakneſs of the kind I mean, attributable to the ſick, the ſpoilt, the ill-tempered, the unfortunate, the aged, women, and the clergy. Now I venture to ſay, there is no obſervant man of the world who has lived to the age of thirty, who has not ſeen numerous inſtances of ſevere tyranny exerciſed by perſons belonging to one or other of theſe claſſes; and which tyranny has been eſtabliſhed, continued and endured, ſolely by reaſon of the weakneſs, real or ſuppoſed, of the perſons exerciſing it. Talking once with a thoughtful man on this ſubject, he remarked to me, that of courſe the generous ſuffered much from the tyranny I was ſpeaking of, as the ſtrength of it was drawn from their ſtrength. It might be compared to an evil government of a rich people, in which their riches furniſhed forth abundant armies wherewith to oppreſs the ſubject.

In quiet times this tyranny is very great. I have often thought whether it was not one very conſiderable compenſation for rude hard times,

or times of dire alarm, that domeſtic tyranny was then probably leſs ſevere: and among the various forms of domeſtic tyranny none occupies a more diſtinguiſhed place than this of the tyranny of the weak over the ſtrong.

If you come to analyſe it, it is a tyranny exerciſed by playing upon the good-nature, the fear of reſponſibility, the dread of acting ſelfiſhly, the horror of giving pain, prevalent among good and kind people. They often know that it is a tremendous tyranny they are ſuffering under, and they do not feel it the leſs becauſe they are conſenting parties.

Meditating ſometimes upon the reſults of this tyranny, I have thought to myſelf what is to ſtop it: in a ſtate of further developed Chriſtianity, there is only more room for it. And then this ſtrange, but perhaps juſt, idea came into my mind, that this tyranny would fall away in a ſtate of clearer knowledge ſuch as might accompany another ſtate of being; for then, the ſecrets of men's hearts not being profoundly concealed by ſilence, or by ſpeech, it would be ſeen what the ſufferers thought of theſe tyrannous proceedings; and the tyrants would ſhrink back, abaſhed at the enormity of their requi-

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When we talk of

" The ills that laws or kings can cauſe or cure,"

our thoughts refer only to the functions of direct and open government; but the laws which regulate the intercourſe of ſociety, public opinion, and in ſhort that almoſt impalpable code of thought and action which grows up in a very eaſy faſhion amongſt man and man and is clothed with none of the ordinary dreſs of power, may yet be the ſubtleſt and often the ſterneſt deſpotiſm.

It is a ſtrange fancy of mine, but I cannot help wiſhing we could move for returns, as their phraſe is in parliament, for the ſuffering cauſed in any one day, or other period of time, throughout the world, to be arranged under certain heads; and we ſhould then ſee what the world has occaſion to fear moſt. What a large amount would come under the heads of unreaſonable fear of others, of miſerable quarrels amongſt relations upon infiniteſimally ſmall ſubjects, of imaginary ſlights, of undue cares, of falſe ſhames, of abſolute miſunderſtandings, of unneceſſary pains to maintain credit or reputation, of vexation that we cannot make others

of the ſame mind with ourſelves. What a wonderful thing it would be to ſee ſet down in figures, as it were, how ingenious we are in plaguing one another. My own private opinion is, that the diſcomfort cauſed by injudicious dreſs worn entirely in deference, as it has before been remarked, to the moſt fooliſh of mankind, in fact to the tyrannous majority, would outweigh many an evil that ſounded very big.

Teſted by theſe perfect returns, which I imagine might be made by the angelic world, if they regard human affairs, perhaps our every-day ſhaving, ſevere ſhirt-collars and other ridiculous garments are equivalent to a great European war once in ſeven years; and we ſhould find that women's ſtays did about as much harm, i. e. cauſed as much ſuffering, as an occaſional peſtilence—ſay, for inſtance, the cholera. We ſhould find perhaps that the vexations ariſing from the income-tax were nearly equal to thoſe cauſed amongſt the ſame claſs of ſufferers by the ill-natured things men fancy have been ſaid behind their backs: and perhaps the whole burden and vexation reſulting from the aggregate of the reſpective national debts of that unthrifty family, the European race, the whole

burden and vexation I ſay, do not come up to the aggregate of annoyances inflicted in each locality by the one ill-natured perſon who generally infeſts each little village, pariſh, houſe, or community.

There is no knowing what ſtrange compariſons and diſcoveries I ſhould in my fancy have been led to — perhaps that the love, ſaid to be inherent in the ſofter ſex, of having the laſt word, cauſes as much miſchief as all the tornadoes of the Tropics; or that the vexation inflicted by ſervants on their maſters by aſſuring them that ſuch and ſuch duties do not belong to their place, is equivalent to all the ſufferings that have been cauſed by mad dogs ſince the world began. But my meditations were ſuddenly interrupted and put to flight by a noiſe, which in deſcribing afterwards in-doors, in ſomewhat high-flown terms, I ſaid cauſed a diſmay like that which would have been felt if, neglectful of the proper periods in hiſtory, the Huns, the Vandals and the Viſigoths, in fact the unruly population of the world, had combined together and ruſhed down upon ſome quiet, orderly cathedral town.

In ſhort, the children of my neighbours re-

turning from ſchool had daſhed into my field, their main deſire being to behold an arranged heap of ſtones and brick-bats which, after being diligently informed of the fact ſeveral times by my ſon Leonard, I had learnt was a houſe he had lately built.

There is a ſort of freemaſonry among children; for theſe knew at once that this heap of ſtones was a houſe, and danced round it with delight as a great work of art. Now, do you ſuppoſe, to come back to the original ſubject of my meditations to-day, that the grown-up child does not want amuſement, when you ſee how greedy children are of it? Do not imagine we grow out of that; we diſguiſe ourſelves by various ſolemnities; but we have none of us loſt the child-nature yet.

I was glad to ſee how merry the children could be though looking ſo blue and cold, and ſtill more pleaſed to find that my preſence did not ſcare them away, and that they have no grown-up feeling as yet about treſpaſſing: I fled, however, from the noiſe into more quiet quarters, and broke up the train of reflections of which I now give theſe outlines, hoping they may be of uſe to ſome one.

CHAPTER IV.

MUCH retroſpect is not a very ſafe or a very wiſe thing: ſtill there are times when a man may do well to look back upon his paſt life and endeavour to take a comprehenſive view of it. And whether ſuch retroſpect is wiſe or not, it cannot be avoided, as our reveries muſt ſometimes turn upon that one life, our own, reſpecting which we have a great number of facts very intereſting to us and thoroughly within our ken. The proceſs is curiouſly different from that purſued by Alnaſchar in the Arabian Nights, who with an imaginary ſpurn, alas too well interpreted by a real geſture, diſpoſed at once of all his ſplendid fortunes gained in reverie. In this proceſs of retroſpection many find that the ſpurn is real as well as the fatal geſture which realized it, only both have been

adminiſtered by the rude world inſtead of by themſelves; the fragments of their broken pottery lie around them; and, going back to fond memories of the paſt, they have to reconſtruct the original reverie—the dream of their youth—the proud purpoſe of their manhood—how fulfilled!

Walking up and down amidſt the young fir-trees in the little plantation to the north-eaſt of the garden, and, occaſionally, with all the intereſt of a young planter, ſtopping in front of a particular tree and inſpecting this year's growth, I got into ſuch a train of retroſpect as I have juſt ſpoken of; and from that, by a proceſs which will be viſible to the reader, was ſoon led into thoughts about the future.

I pictured to myſelf a deſcendant of mine, a man of dilapidated fortune but ſtill owning this houſe and garden. The few adjoining fields he will long ago have parted with. But he loves the place, having been brought up here by his ſad gentle mother, and having lived here with his young ſiſter, then a rapturous imaginative girl, his companion and delight. Through the ſmallneſs of their fortune and conſequently the narrow circle of their acquaintances, ſhe

will have married a man totally unfit for her; the romance of her nature has turned ſomewhat ſour; and, though occaſionally high-minded, ſhe is very peeviſh now, and is no longer the companion that ſhe was to her brother. He juſt remembers his father pacing with diſturbed ſtep under theſe trees which I am now walking about. He recollects before his father's death how eagerly the fond wife uſed to waylay and open large packets which ſhe would not always bring to the dying man's bed. He now knows them to have been law papers: and when he thinks of theſe things, he utters harſh words about the iniquity of the law in England; and ſays ſomething about law growing in upon a falling eſtate like fungus upon old and failing wood.

Theſe things are now long paſt: they occurred in his childhood. His mother is dead and lies in that quiet church-yard in the wood, where, if I miſtake not, one of his anceſtors will alſo have found a peaceful reſting-place. The houſe has fully partaken of the falling fortunes of its ſucceſſive owners. The furniture is too old and worn for any new comer to be tempted to occupy the houſe; and the little

garden is let to a market-gardener. Strawberries will grow then on the turf where I am now walking, and which John, after mowing twice in the week and having ſpent all his time in its vicinity from working-day morning till working-day night, comes to look at on a Sunday, and with his hands in his pockets and himſelf arrayed in a waiſtcoat too bright almoſt to behold, ſurveys intently, as if it were one of the greateſt products of human invention. And John need not be aſhamed of this ſingle-minded delight in his work, for, though it is nothing remarkable in England, the whole continent of Europe does not probably afford ſuch a well-ſhaven bit of graſs: and, as for our love of gardens, it is the laſt refuge of art in the minds and ſouls of many Engliſhmen: if we did not care for gardens, I hardly know what in the way of beauty we ſhould care for. Well, this has all ceaſed by that time to be pleaſure-garden, and I fear to think of the profane cabbages which will then occupy this trim velvety little ſpot. I hope that poor John from no diſtant place will behold the profanation.

I have lingered on theſe details; but I muſt now bring my diſtant deſcendant nearer to us.

He will live in ſome large town getting his bread in a humble way, and will ſometimes ſteal down here, pretending to want to know whether any body has applied to take the tumble-down place. That is what he ſays to his wife (for of courſe being ſo poor this fooliſh Milverton has married) but ſhe underſtands him better than to be deceived by that.

He has juſt made one of theſe excurſions, having, for economy's ſake and a wiſh to avoid the neighbours, got out at a ſtation ten miles off (our cathedral town) and walked over to his houſe. It is evening, and he has juſt arrived. Tired as he is, he takes a turn round the garden, and after a long-drawn ſigh which I know well the words for, he enters the houſe. The market gardener lives in it, and his wife takes care of the maſter's rooms. She has lighted a fire: the ſmoke hardly aſcends, but ſtill there is warmth enough to call out much of the latent dampneſs of the apartment. The things about him are ſomewhat cheerleſs certainly, but he would not wiſh them to be otherwiſe. They would be very inharmonious if they were. During his meagre ſupper, he is entertained with an account of the repairs that

muſt be looked to. The water comes in here, and part of the wall has fallen down there; and farmer Smith ſays (the coarſe woman need not have repeated the very words) that if Mr. Milverton is too poor to mend his own fence, he, farmer Smith, muſt do it himſelf. Patiently the poor man appears to attend to all this, but is thinking all the while of his pale mother, and of his wondering, as a child, why ſhe never uſed to look up when horſe or man went by as ſhe ſat working at that bay window, and getting his clothes ready for ſchool.

At laſt the market-gardener's wife, little attended to, bounces out of the room; and her abrupt departure rouſes my diſtant deſcendant to think of ways and means. And here I cannot help, as if I were preſent at the reverie, breaking in and ſaying, "Do not cut down that yew tree in the back garden, the ſtately well-grown one which was an ancient tree in my time." But no, upon ſecond thoughts, I will ſay nothing of the kind. "Cut it down, cut them all down, dear diſtant deſcendant, rather than let little tradeſmen want their money, or that you do the leaſt diſhonourable thing."

Apparently, the preſent queſtion of ways and means is ſettled ſomehow, for he riſes and paces about the room. In a corner there lies an aged Parliamentary report, a remnant from my old library, the bulk of which has long been ſold. It is the report of a Seleƈt Committee upon the effeƈt on prices of the influx of Californian gold. There are ſome ſide notes which he takes to have been mine; and this makes him think of me—not very kindly. Theſe are his thoughts—This anceſtor of mine, I ſee he buſied himſelf about many worldly things; it is not likely that, taking an intereſt in ſuch affairs, he would not have cared to have had ſome hand in managing them; I conjeƈture that indeed, if only from one ſaying of his, that the buſtle of life, if good for little elſe, at leaſt keeps ſome ſadneſs down at the bottom of the heart; and yet I do not find that our eſtate proſpered much under him. He might now, if he had been a proſperous gentleman, have bought ſome part of Woodcot chaſe (which was ſold in his time) and is now all building ground, and I ſhould not have been in this curſed plight.

" Diſtant deſcendant, do not let misfortune

make you, as it ſo often does make men, ungenerous."

He feels this and reſumes. I wonder why he did not become rich and great. I ſuſpect he was very laborious. ("You do me full juſtice there.") I ſuppoſe he was very verſatile and did not keep to one thing at a time. ("You do me injuſtice there; for I was always aware how much men muſt limit their efforts to effect anything.") In his books he ſometimes makes ſhrewd worldly remarks which ſhow he underſtood ſomething of the world, and he ought to have maſtered it.

"Now, my dear young relative, allow me to ſay that laſt is a very weak remark of yours upon character. Admitting, for the ſake of argument, that what you urge in my favour be true, you muſt know that the people who write ſhrewdly are often the moſt eaſy to impoſe upon, or have been ſo. I almoſt ſuſpect, without, however, having looked into the matter, that Rochefoucault was a tender lover, a warm friend, and, in general, a dupe (happy for him) to all the impulſes and affections which he would have us imagine he ſaw through and had maſtered. The ſimple write

ſhrewdly: but do not deſcribe what they do. And the hard and worldly would be too wiſe in their generation to write about what they practiſe, even if they perceived it, which they ſeldom do, lacking delicacy of imagination."

Perhaps (he continues) this anceſtor of mine had no ambition, and did not care about anything but that unwholeſome ſcribbling ("ungracious again, diſtant deſcendant!") which has brought us in but little produce of any kind.

Dear diſtant kinſman, now it is my turn to ſpeak; now liſten to me; and I will ſhow you the family failing, not a very uncommon one, which has reduced us by degrees to this ſad ſtate; for we, your anceſtors, look on and ſuffer with you.

I am afraid we muſt own that we were of that fooliſh claſs of men who never can ſay a hearty good word for themſelves. You might put a Milverton in the moſt favourable poſition in the world, you might have made him a biſhop in George the Second's time, or a miniſter to a Spaniſh king in the 17th Century, and ſtill he would have contrived to ſhuffle awkwardly out of wealth and dignities. When

the right time came for ſelf-aſſertion and for ſaying a ſtout word for his own cauſe, or for that of his kith and kin,

" Vox faucibus hæſit ; "

The poor, ſimple fellow was almoſt inaudible; and, muttering ſomething, was ſuppoſed to ſay juſt that which he did not. I foreſaw, therefore, that unleſs ſome Milverton were by good fortune to marry into a ſturdy, puſhing family (which would be better for him than any amount of preſent fortune) it was all over with the race, as far as worldly proſperity is concerned. And ſo it ſeems to be. If you feel that you are free from this defect, I will enſure you fortune. Talk of cutting down the yew-tree, not a ſtick of the plantation need be touched ; and I already ſee deep belts of new wood riſe round newly-gained acres. Only be ſure that you really can ſtand up ſtoutly for yourſelf.

I ſee what you are thinking of—that paſſage in Bacon (and it pleaſes me to find that you are ſo far well-read, though you have ſold the books) where he ſays that there are occaſions when a man needs a friend to do or ſay for him what he never can do or ſay ſo well, or even at

all, for himſelf. True: but, my ſimple-minded relative, have you lived to the age of twenty-ſeven, and not diſcovered that Phœnixes and Friends are creatures of the leaſt prolific nature? Not that, adopting your miſanthropic mood, I would ſay that there are no ſuch creatures as friends, and that they are not potent for good. A man's friend, however, is ill, or travelling, or powerleſs; but good ſelf-aſſurance is always within call.

You are mute: you feel then that you are guilty too. Be comforted; perhaps there is ſome iſland of the bleſt where there will be no occaſion for puſhing. Once this happened to me, that a great fierce obdurate crowd were puſhing up in long line towards a door which was to lead them to ſome good thing; and I, not liking the crowd, ſtole out of it, having made up my mind to be laſt, and was leaning indolently againſt a cloſed-up ſide door: when, all of a ſudden, this door opened, and I was the firſt to walk in, and ſaw arrive long after me the men who had been thruſting and ſtruggling round me. This does not often happen in the world, but I think there was a meaning in it.

But now no more about me. We have to think what is to be done in your caſe.

You labour under a retiring diſpoſition, you are married, and you wiſh to retrieve the family fortunes. This is a full and frank ſtatement of your caſe, and there is no doubt that it is a very bad one, requiring wiſe and energetic remedies. Firſt, you muſt at once abandon all thoſe purſuits which depend for ſucceſs upon refined appreciation. You muſt ſeek to do ſomething which many people demand. I cannot illuſtrate what I mean better than by telling you what I often tell my publiſher, whenever he ſpeaks of the ſlackneſs of trade. There is a confectioner's ſhop next door which is thronged with people: I beg him (the publiſher) to draw a moral from this, and to ſet up, himſelf, an eating houſe. That would be appealing to the million in the right way. I tell him he could hire me and others of his "eminent hands" to cook inſtead of to write, and then, inſtead of living on our wits, (ſlender diet indeed!) we ourſelves ſhould be able to buy books, and ſhould become great patrons of literature. I did not tell him, becauſe it is not wiſe to run down authors in the preſence of

publiſhers, what I may mention to you, that many of us would be much more wiſely and wholeſomely employed in cooking than in writing. But this is nothing to you. What I want you, dear diſtant kinſman, to perceive, is that you muſt at once cultivate ſomething which is in general demand. Emigrate, if you like, and cultivate the ground. Cattle are always in ſome demand, if only for tallow: It is better to provide the fuel for the lamp than thoſe productions which are ſaid to ſmell moſt of it. I cannot enter into details with you; becauſe I do not foreſee what will be the flouriſhing trades in your time. I can only give you general advice.

One of the great aids, or hindrances, to ſucceſs in anything lies in the temperament of a man. I do not know yours; but I venture to point out to you what is the beſt temperament, namely, a combination of the deſponding and the reſolute, or, as I had better expreſs it, of the apprehenſive and the reſolute. Such is the temperament of great commanders. Secretly, they rely upon nothing and upon nobody. There is ſuch a powerful element of failure in all human affairs, that a ſhrewd man is al-

ways ſaying to himſelf, what ſhall I do, if that which I count upon, does not come out as I expect. This foreſight dwarfs and cruſhes all but men of great reſolution.

Then, be not over-choice in looking out for what may exactly ſuit you; but rather be ready to adopt any opportunities that occur. Fortune does not ſtoop often to take any one up. Favourable opportunities will not happen preciſely in the way that you have imagined. Nothing does. Do not be diſcouraged, therefore, by a preſent detriment in any courſe which may lead to ſomething good. Time is ſo precious here.

Get, if you can, into one or other of the main grooves of human affairs. It is all the difference of going by railway, and walking over a ploughed field, whether you adopt common courſes, or ſet up one for yourſelf. You will ſee, if your times are anything like ours, moſt inferior perſons highly placed in the army, in the church, in office, at the bar. They have ſomehow got upon the line, and have moved on well with very little original motive power of their own. Do not let this make you talk as if merit were utterly neglected in theſe or any profeſſions: only that getting

well into the groove will frequently do inſtead of any great excellence.

My ſarcaſtic friend, Elleſmere, whom you will probably know by repute, as a great Chief-Juſtice, or Lord Chancellor, ſays, with the utmoſt gravity, that no man with leſs than a thouſand pounds a year (I wonder whether in your times you will think that a large or a ſmall income) can afford to have private opinions upon certain important ſubjects. He admits that he has known it done upon eight hundred a year; but only by very prudent people with ſmall families.

But the night is coming on, and I feel, my dear deſcendant, as if I ſhould like to ſay ſomething more ſolemn to you than theſe worldly maxims.

Whatever happens, do not be diſſatisfied with your worldly fortunes, leſt that ſpeech be juſtly made to you, which was once made to a repining perſon much given to talk of how great ſhe and hers had been, "Yes, Madam," was the cruſhing reply, "we all find our level at laſt."

Eternally that fable is true, of a choice being

given to men on their entrance into life. Two majeſtic women ſtand before you: one in rich veſture, ſuperb, with what ſeems like a mural crown on her head and plenty in her hand, and ſomething of triumph, I will not ſay of boldneſs, in her eye; and ſhe, the queen of this world, can give you many things. The other is beautiful, but not alluring, nor rich, nor powerful; and there are traces of care and ſhame and ſorrow in her face; and (marvellous to ſay) her look is downcaſt and yet noble. She can give you nothing, but ſhe can make you ſomebody. If you cannot bear to part from her ſweet ſublime countenance which hardly veils with ſorrow its infinity, follow her: follow her, I ſay, if you are really minded ſo to do; but do not, while you are on this track, look back with ill-concealed envy on the glittering things which fall in the path of thoſe who prefer to follow the rich dame, and to pick up the riches and honours which fall from her cornucopia.

This is in ſubſtance what a true artiſt ſaid to me only the other day, impatient, as he told me, of the complaints of thoſe who would purſue art, and yet would have fortune.

But, indeed, all moral writings teem with this remark in one form or other. You cannot have inconſiſtent advantages. Do not ſhun this maxim becauſe it is common-place. On the contrary, take the cloſeſt heed of what obſervant men, who would probably like to ſhow originality, are yet conſtrained to repeat. Therein lies the marrow of the wiſdom of the world. Such things are wiſer than proverbs which are ſeldom true except for the occaſion on which they are uſed; and are generally good to ſtrengthen a reſolve rather than to enlighten it.

Theſe latter words of mine fall upon an inattentive ear; for my diſtant deſcendant, who has been gradually becoming more compoſed during the progreſs of this moral eſſay, at laſt falls quite aſleep. Perhaps the great triumph of all moral writings, including ſermons, is that at leaſt they have produced ſome ſweet and innocent ſleep to thoſe who heard them.

Poor fellow! I now ſee how careworn he ſeems, though not without ſome good looks, which he owes to his great great great grandmother, of whom, as he lies there, he puts me much in mind. He ought to thank me for

thoſe good looks and to admit that winning ſome beauty for the family is at leaſt as valuable as that Woodcot chaſe which he thinks I ought to have laid hold of. But our unfair deſcendants never think of anything in our favour: this gout and that aſthma and thoſe mortgages are all remembered againſt us; we hear but little on the other ſide.

Sleep on, dear diſtant progeny of mine, and I will keep the night watches of your anxious thought.

CHAPTER V.

THESE companions of my ſolitude, my reveries, take many forms. Sometimes, the nebulous ſtuff out of which they are formed, comes together with ſome method and ſet purpoſe, and may be compared to a heavy cloud —then they will do for an eſſay or moral diſcourſe; at others, they are merely like thoſe ſportive diſconnected forms of vapour which are ſtreaked acroſs the heavens, now like a feather, now like the outline of a camel, doubtleſs obeying ſome law and with ſome deſign, but ſuch as mocks our obſervation; at other times again, they arrange themſelves like thoſe fleckered clouds where all the heavens are regularly broken up in ſmall diviſions lying evenly over each other with light between each. The reſult of this laſt-mentioned ſtate of reverie is well

brought out in converſation; and ſo I am going to give the reader an account of ſome talk which I had lately with my friend Elleſmere.

Once or twice before, I have uſed this name Elleſmere as if it were familiar to others as to myſelf. It is to be found in a book edited, as it appears, by a neighbouring clergyman, named Dunsford, who was obliging and laborious enough to ſet down ſome converſations in which he, Elleſmere and myſelf took part; and which he called "Friends in Council." There is no occaſion to refer to this book to underſtand Elleſmere: a man ſoon ſhows himſelf by his talk, if he does by anything. Moreover the average reader will find the book a ſomewhat ſober, not to ſay dull, affair, embracing ſuch queſtions as ſlavery, government, management of the poor, and ſuch like. The reader, however, who is not the average reader, may perhaps find ſomething worth agreeing with, or differing from, in the book.

I flatter myſelf that laſt ſentence is very ſkilful. The poor publiſher, or rather his head man, complains ſadly that not even the uſual amount of advertiſement, not to ſpeak of

puffing, is allowed to him, the good clergyman having a peculiar averſion to ſuch modes of dealing, and believing that good books, if there were ſuch things, ſhould be ſought after, and not poked in the faces of purchaſers like Jews' penknives at coach doors. By this delicate piece of flattery, for each reader will ſecretly conclude that he is above the average and haſten to buy the book, I ſhall have done more than many puffs direct. Therefore be at eaſe, man of buſineſs, the avenues to thy ſhop will be thronged. I can utter this prophecy with more confidence as the ſhop in queſtion is in the high road to the Great Exhibition.

Well, my friend Elleſmere was with me for a day, we were lounging about the garden, the great black dog which I always let looſe when Elleſmere is here, to pleaſe him, was ſlowly following us to and fro, hanging out his large tongue and wiſhing we would ſit down, but ſtill not being able to reſiſt following us about; when Elleſmere ſuddenly interrupted ſomething I was ſaying with theſe words "The queſtion between us almoſt comes to this: you want a ſheep-dog. I am ſatisfied with a watch-dog—Rollo will do for me; and, as you ſee, he is content with my approbation."

This abrupt ſpeech requires ſome explanation. I had been talking about ſome matters connected with ſtateſmanſhip, and ſtricturing, perhaps too ſeverely, ſome recent acts of government, in which, as I ſaid, I detected ſome of the worſt habits of modern policy—a mixture of raſhneſs and indeciſion—meddling and doing nothing—ſpending, as I added, moſt of the powder for the flaſh in the pan. Then I went on to deplore, that always ſtateſmanſhip appeared to come upon the ſtage too late. Is nothing ever to be done in time?*

A good deal of what I ſaid is true, I think, but ought to be taken "cum grano," as they ſay; for men who have lived a good deal in active life, and are withdrawn from it, are apt to comment too ſeverely on the conduct of thoſe who are left behind. They forget the difficulty of getting anything done in this perplexed world, and their own former difficulties in that way are ſoftened by diſtance. It was well that Elleſmere interrupted me. The converſation thus proceeded.

Milverton. Yes, that is the point. I confeſs I ſhould like ſomething of the ſheep-dog

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* Written in 1850.

in a ruler. I think we, of all nations, can bear judicious interference and regulation; we ſhould not be cramped by it.

Elleſmere. In a repreſentative government is the folly of the governed to find no place?

Milverton. Yes, but, my good friend, you need not be anxious to provide for that. Folly will find a place even at the ſide of princes. That was the thing ſymbolized by great men's jeſters. But, putting ſarcaſm aſide, Elleſmere, I dont mean to blame preſent men ſo much as preſent doctrines and ſyſtems. Some of the men in power, or likely to be, in this country, are very honeſt capable brave men, full of deſire to do good. But they have too little power, or rather they meet with too much obſtruction. Now, it is not wiſe to ſwathe a creature up like a foreign baby, and then ſay, exert yourſelf, govern us, let there be no delay.

Elleſmere. This obſtruction is over-eſtimated. If a ruling man wanted to do anything good, I think he could do it, though I do admit that there are large powers of obſtruction to be encountered.

Milverton. I do believe you are right. A ſtateſman might venture to be greater and bolder

than his poſition or apparent power quite warrants. And if he were to fall, he would fall—and there an end.

Elleſmere. And no ſuch great damage either.

Milverton. But to return to your watch-dog and ſheep-dog. There are two things very different demanded from ſtateſmen: one, carrying on the routine of office; the other, originating meaſures, ſetting the limits within which private exertion ſhould act. You do not mean to contend, Elleſmere, that it would not have been wiſe for a government to have interfered with railway legiſlation earlier and more efficiently than it did.

Elleſmere. No—few people know better than I do the immenſe loſs of time, money, labour, temper and happineſs which might have been ſaved in that matter.

Milverton. Now look again at Sanitary meaſures. Conſider the years it has taken; and, for aught I know, may yet take, to get a Smoke Prohibition Bill paſſed. If ſuch a thing is wiſe and poſſible let us have it; if not, tell us it cannot be done. I have taken inſtances in phyſical things juſt as they occurred to me: I might have alluded to higher matters which are

left in the ſame way, to ſee what will happen, to wait for the breezes, perhaps the ſtorms, of popular agitation.

Elleſmere. People in authority are as fearful of attacking any ſocial evil as men are of cutting down old trees about their houſes. There is always ſomething, however, to be ſaid for the old trees.

Milverton. It would moſtly be better though to cut them down at once, and begin to plant ſomething at the proper diſtance from their houſes.

Elleſmere. Well, Milverton, there is one thing you muſt remember, and that is, that intelligent men writing or talking about government are apt to fancy themſelves, or ſuch men as themſelves, in power; and ſo are inclined to be very liberal in aſſigning the limits of that power. Let them fancy ſome of the fooliſh people they know in this imaginary poſition of great power; and then ſee how the intelligent men begin to ſhudder at the thought of this power, and to deſire very ſecure limits for it, and very narrow ſpace for its exerciſe.

Milverton. Intelligent public opinion will in theſe days prevent vigorous action in a miniſter from hardening into deſpotiſm.

Elleſmere. Pleaſe repeat that again, my friend. "Intelligent public opinion"? Were thoſe the words: did I catch them rightly?

Milverton. You did. There is ſuch a thing, Elleſmere. It is not the firſt opinion heard in the country; it is not always loud on the huſtings; but ſurely there are a great number of perſons in a country like this, who try to think and eventually form intelligent public opinion.

Elleſmere. I am afraid they are not a very active body.

Milverton. Not the moſt active: but they come in at ſome time.

Elleſmere. I do not wiſh to be impertinent, but do any of theſe people who ultimately (ultimately, I like that word) form intelligent public opinion, live in the country? I can imagine a retired wiſdom in ſome Court in London, ſay Pump Court for inſtance, but I cannot fancy the blowſy wiſdom of the country.

Milverton. Now, Elleſmere, do not be provoking.

Elleſmere. I am all gravity again: but juſt allow me to propound one little theory, namely, that it is when the retired wiſdom of town is revivified by country air (on a viſit) it is apt to

develope itſelf into—what is it—oh—" intelligent public opinion."

Milverton. Now, as you have had your joke, I will proceed. I have a theory that the temperament and habits of mind of individual ſtateſmen have a good deal to do with government. I do not yet believe that we are all compounded into ſome great machine about which you can exactly calculate the reſults.

Elleſmere. What is your pet temperament for a ſtateſman?

Milverton. That is a large queſtion: one thing I ſhould be inclined to ſay, with reſpect to his habit of mind—he ſhould doubt till the laſt, and then act like a man who has never doubted.

Elleſmere. Cleverly put, but untrue, after the faſhion of you maxim-mongers. He ſhould not act like a man who has never doubted, but like a man who was in the habit of doubting till he had received ſufficient information. He ſhould not convey to you the idea of a man who was given to doubt, or not to doubt; but of one who could wait till he had enquired.

Milverton. Your criticiſm is juſt. Well, then, another thing which occurs to me reſpect-

ing his habits of mind is, that he ſhould be one of thoſe people who are not given to any ſyſtem, and yet who have an exceeding love of improvement and diſpoſition to regulate.

Elleſmere. That is good. I diſtruſt ſyſtems. I find that men talk of principles; and mean, when you come to enquire, rules connected with certain ſyſtems.

Milverton. This enables me to bring my notions of government interference to a point. It ſhould be a principle in a ſtateſman's mind that he ſhould not interfere ſo as to deaden private action: at the ſame time, he ſhould be profoundly anxious that right and good ſhould be done, and conſequently not fear to undertake reſponſibility. He ſhould not be entrapped, mentally, into any ſyſtem of policy which held him to interfere here, or not to interfere there; but he ſhould be inclined to look at each caſe on its own merits. This is very hard work. Syſtems ſave trouble—the trouble of thinking.

Elleſmere. There is ſome ſenſe in what you ſay. If we talk no more about ſtateſmanſhip, and to tell the truth I am rather tired of the ſubject, our dialogue will end like the dialogues in a book, where, after much ſham ſtage-fight-

ing, the author's opinion is always made to prevail. By the way, I dare ſay you think that the nurſery for Stateſmen is Literature; and that in theſe days of Railways, a ſhort line from Grub to Downing Street (a ſingle ſet of rails, as no one will want to return) is imperatively needed.

Milverton. No, I do not. I think that good Literature, like any other good work, gives notice of material out of which a ſtateſman might chooſe. To make a good book, my dear friend, is a very hard thing, I ſuſpect. I do not mean a work of genius. Of courſe ſuch are very rare. But to give an account of any tranſaction; to put forward any connected views; in ſhort, to do any mere literary work well; it requires many of the things which tend to make a good man of buſineſs—induſtry for inſtance, method, clearneſs, reſolve, power of adaptation.

Elleſmere. Yes, no doubt: foreign nations ſeem to have profited ſo much from calling literary men to their aid, that—

Milverton. That is an unjuſt ſneer, Elleſmere. Some of the writings of the men to whom I know you allude, do not fulfil the condition of being good books; are full of falſe antitheſes, illogical concluſions, vapid aſſertions, and words

arranged according to prettineſs, not to meaning. Such books are beacons; they tell all men, the people who wrote us are ſprightly fellows, but cannot be truſted, they love ſound more than ſenſe, pray do not truſt them with any function requiring ſenſe rather than ſound.

But you are not to conclude becauſe ſome men make uſe of Literature, perhaps the only way open to them of carrying their views into action, that they could not act themſelves. Napoleon was always writing early in life; Cæſar indicted books, even a grammar; a whole hoſt of captains and ſtateſmen in the 16th Century were writers. Follow Cervantes, Mendoza, Sidney, Camoens, Deſcartes, Paul Louis Courier, to the field; and come back with them, if you ever do come back alive, you individual clothed with horſehair and audacity; and then follow them to their ſtudies and ſee whether they cannot give a good account of themſelves in both departments.

Elleſmere. Piſtol is come back again on earth, or Bombaſtes Furioſo, neither of whoſe characters ſit well upon you. But, my friend, we are wont in law to look to the point at iſſue; we were talking of ſtateſmen, not of ſoldiers.

Milverton. Machiavelli—

Elleſmere. That worthy man!

Milverton. Cæſar again! Lorenzo di Medici, James the Firſt of Scotland, Milton, Bacon, Grotius, Shafteſbury, Somers, St. John, Temple, Burke. And were I to rack my brains, or my books, I could no doubt make an ample liſt.

Elleſmere. Good, bad, and indifferent: here they come, all together.

Milverton. And have there been no bad ſtateſmen amongſt thoſe who had no tincture of letters?

Elleſmere. One or two, certainly.

Milverton. You know, Elleſmere, I have never talked loudly of the claims of literary men, and have always maintained that for them, eſpecially when they are of real merit, to complain of neglect, is for the moſt part abſurd. A great writer, as I think Mr. Carlyle has well ſaid, creates a want for himſelf — a moſt artificial one. Nobody wanted him before he appeared. He has to ſhow them what they want him for. You might as well talk of Leverrier's planet having been neglected in George the Second's time. It had not been diſcovered: that is all.

There may be miſunderſtandings as to the nature of literary merit, as indeed of all merit, which may prevent worldly men from making due uſe of it in worldly affairs. For inſtance, I ſhould ſay that diplomatic ſervices are ſervices peculiarly fit to be performed by literary men. They are likely to be more of coſmopolites than other men are. Their various accompliſhments ſerve them as means of attaching others in ſtrange countries. Their obſervations are likely to be good. One can eaſily ſee that a great deal of their habitual work would come into play in ſuch employments. And there is an appearance of hardſhip in not giving, at leaſt occaſionally, to men who are particularly ſhut out from moſt worldly advantages, thoſe offices which they promiſe to be moſt fitted for.

Elleſmere. It would improve many a literary man greatly to have, or to have had, ſome real buſineſs.

Milverton. No doubt. Indeed I have always thought it is a melancholy thing to ſee how ſhut up, or rather I ſhould ſay, how twiſted and deformed a man becomes by ſurrendering himſelf to any one art, ſcience, calling, or culture. You ſee a perſon become a lawyer, a

phyſician, a clergyman, an author, or an artiſt; and ceaſe to be a man, a wholeſome man, fairly developed in all ways. Each man's art or function, however ſerviceable, ſhould be attached to him no more than to a ſoldier his ſword, which the accompliſhed military man can lay aſide, and not even remind you that he has ever worn ſuch a thing.

Elleſmere. An idea ſtrikes me: I ſee how literary men may be rewarded, literature ſoundly encouraged, and yet the author be injured the leaſt poſſible by his craft. Hitherto we have given penſions for what a man has written. I would do this: I would aſcertain when a man has acquired that lamentable facility for doing ſecondrate things which is not uncommon in literature as in other branches of life, and then I would ſay to him, I ſee you can write, here is a hundred a year for you as long as you are quite quiet. Indeed, I think penſions and honours ſhould generally be given to the perſons who could have done the things for which ſuch rewards are given, but who have not done them. I would ſay to this man, You have great parliamentary influence; you did not uſe it for mere party purpoſes; here is a peerage for you. You,

turning to another man, might have become a great lawyer, or rather a lawyer in great place, you had too much—

Milverton. Modeſty—

Elleſmere. Pooh, nonſenſe! modeſty never did any body any harm. No, let me go on with my ſpeech. You had too much honeſty, or ſcrupulouſneſs, to eſcape being thrown out for the borough of— which (as a lawyer to get on in the higheſt offices muſt pleaſe a conſtituency as well as underſtand his buſineſs) was fatal to you. Here, however, is a baronetcy for you.

Here, you, Mr. Milverton, you might have written two books a year (dreadful thought!) you have not always inflicted one upon us. Be Guelphed and conſider yourſelf well off. Keep yourſelf quiet for ſeveral years, and we may advance you further.

Oh, what a patron of arts and letters is loſt in me! Now this dog can bark and make a horrible noiſe, to diſtinguiſh himſelf: he does not do it—that is why I like you ſo much, my dear Rollo, (at that inſtant, unluckily, Rollo taking heed of Elleſmere's comical geſtures and ſeeing that ſomething was addreſſed to him, be-

gan to friſk about and bark). Oh, dear me, I ſee one can't praiſe or encourage any creature without doing miſchief.

Milverton. You have not to reproach yourſelf for having done much in this way.

Elleſmere. Too much—ſadly too much. But here comes John with a ſolicitous face, to get your orders about planting the trees which came laſt night, and which ought to have been put in early this morning. Attend to them: they are your great works; ſome of them may live to a remote poſterity: and, while you are about it, my good fellow, do put in ſomething which will produce eatables. Thoſe fir cones are very pretty things, but hard to eat. Remember that a certain learned gentleman who hopes to live to a good old age, is very fond of mulberries; and if ſome trees were put in now, he might have ſomething good to eat when he comes into the country, and be able to refreſh himſelf after delivering judicious opinions on all ſubjects.

So we ſeparated, I to my trees, and Elleſmere to take the dog out for a walk.

CHAPTER VI.

I RESOLVED to-day to go out into the neighbouring pine-wood alone, to con over ſome notes which I am anxious to read by myſelf, with only an occaſional remark from a wood-pigeon, or what may be gained from the gliding, ruſtling ſquirrel. There is ſcarcely anything in nature to be compared with a pine wood, I think. I remember once when, after a long journey, I was approaching a city ennobled by great works of art, and of great renown, that I had to paſs through what I was told by the guide-books was moſt inſipid country, only to be hurried over as faſt as mightbe, and nothing to be thought or ſaid about it. But the guide-books, though very clever and uſeful things in their way, do not know each of us perſonally, nor what we ſecretly like and care for. Well, I

was ſpeeding through this "unintereſting" country, and now there remained but one long dull ſtage, as I read, to be gone through before I ſhould reach the much-wiſhed-for city. It was neceſſary to ſtay ſome time (for we travelled vetturino-faſhion) at the little poſt-houſe, and I walked on, promiſing to be in the way whenever the vehicle ſhould overtake me. The road led through a wood, chiefly of pines, varied, however, occaſionally by other trees.

Into this wood I ſtrayed. There was that almoſt indeſcribably ſoothing noiſe (the Romans would have uſed the word "ſuſurrus,") the aggregate of many gentle movements of gentle creatures. The birds hopped but a few paces off, as I approached them; the brilliant butterflies wavered hither and thither before me; there was a ſoft breeze that day, and the tops of the tall trees ſwayed to and fro politely to each other. I found many delightful reſting-places. It was not all denſe wood; but here and there were glades (ſuch open ſpots I mean as would be cut through by the ſword for an army to paſs, for that I take it is the meaning of the word glade); and here and there ſtood a clump of trees of different heights and foliage,

as beautifully arranged as if ſome triumph of the art of landſcape had been intended, though it was only Nature's way of healing up the gaps in the foreſt. For her healing is a new beauty.

It was very warm, without which nothing is beautiful to me; and I fell into the pleaſanteſt train of thought. The eaſineſs of that preſent moment ſeemed to ſhow the poſſibility of all care being driven away from the world ſome day. For thus peace brings a ſenſation of power with it. I ſhall not ſay what I thought of, for it is not good always to be communicative; but altogether that hour in the pine wood was the happieſt hour of the whole journey, though I ſaw many grand pictures and noble ſtatues, a mighty river and buildings which were built when people had their own clear thoughts of what they meant to do and how they would do it. But in ſeeing theſe things there is, ſo to ſpeak, ſomething that is official, that muſt be done in a ſet way; and after all, it is the chance felicities in minor things which are ſo pleaſant in a journey. You had intended, for inſtance, to go and hear ſome great ſervice, and there was ſomething to be done, and a crowd to be encountered; and

you open your window and find, as the warm air ſtreams in, that beautiful ſounds come with it; in truth your window is not far off from an opening in one of the cathedral windows, and there you ſtay drinking in all the muſic, being alone. You feel that a bit of good fortune has happened to you: and you are happier all the day for it.

It is the ſame thing in the journey of life: pleaſure falls into no plan.

I think I have juſtified my liking for a pine-wood; and though the particular wood I can get at here is but a poor thing as compared with the great foreſts I have been thinking of, yet looked at in the kaleidoſcope faſhion, a picture of great variety and harmony may be made out of a few mean particulars.

To my wood then I wandered; and, after pacing up and down a little, and enjoying the rich colour of the trunks of the trees, I ſat down upon a tree that had been lately felled, and read out my notes to myſelf. Here they are. They begin, I ſee, with a little narration which however is not a bad beginning.

It was a bright winter's day; and I ſat upon a garden ſeat in a ſheltered nook towards the ſouth, having come out of my ſtudy to enjoy the warmth, like a fly that has left ſome ſnug crevice to ſtretch his legs upon the unwontedly ſunny pane in December. My little daughter (ſhe is a very little thing about four years old) came running up to me, and when ſhe had arrived at my knees, held up a ſtraggling but pretty weed. Then, with great earneſtneſs and as if freſh from ſome controverſy on the ſubject, ſhe exclaimed, "Is this a weed, Papa; is this a weed?"

"Yes, a weed," I replied.

With a look of diſappointment ſhe moved off to the one ſhe loved beſt amongſt us; and, aſking the ſame queſtion, received the ſame anſwer.

"But it has flowers," the child replied.

"That does not ſignify; it is a weed," was the inexorable anſwer.

Preſently, after a moment's conſideration, the child ran off again, and meeting the gardener juſt near my nook, though out of ſight from where I ſat, ſhe coaxingly addreſſed him.

"Nicholas dear, is this a weed?"

" Yes, miſs, they call it ' Shepherd's purſe.' "

A pauſe enſued: I thought the child was now fairly ſilenced by authority, when all at once the little voice began again, " Will you plant it in my garden, Nicholas dear: do plant it in my garden."

There was no reſiſting the anxious entreaty of the child; and man and child moved off together to plant the weed in one of thoſe plots of ground which the children walk about upon a good deal, and put branches of trees in and grown-up flowers, and then examine the roots, (a ſyſtem as encouraging as other ſyſtems of education I could name) and which they call their gardens.

But the child's words " will you plant it in my garden," remained upon my mind. That is what I have always been thinking, I exclaimed: and it is what I will begin by ſaying.

And, indeed, dear reader, if I were to tell you how long I have been thinking of the ſubject which I mean to preface by the child's fond words; and how hopeleſs it has at times appeared to me to ſay anything worth hearing about it; and how I have ſtill clung to my re-

ſolve, and worked on at other things with a view of coming eventually to this, you would ſympathize with me already, as we do with any man who keeps a taſk long in mind and heart, though he execute it at laſt but poorly, and though it be but a poor taſk ſuch as a fortune for himſelf, or a tomb for his remains. For we like to ſee a man perſevere in anything.

Without more preface then I will ſay at once that this ſubject is one which I have been wont to call "the great ſin of great cities"—not that in ſo calling it, I have perhaps been ſtrictly juſt, but the deſcription will do well enough. For what is the thing which muſt ſo often diminiſh the pride of man when contemplating the ſplendid monuments of a great city, its ſhops, its public buildings, parks, equipages, and above all, the wonderful way in which vaſt crowds of people go about their affairs with ſo little outward conteſt and confuſion? I imagine the beholder in the beſt parts of the town, not diving into narrow ſtreets, wandering ſickened and exhauſted near uncovered ditches in ſqualid ſuburbs, or ſtudiouſly looking behind the brilliant ſurface of

things. But what is it which on that very ſurface, helping to form a part of the brilliancy (like the priſmatic colours ſeen on ſtagnant film) conveys at times to any thoughtful mind an impreſſion of the deepeſt mournfulneſs, a perception of the dark blots upon human civilization, in a word, ſome appreciation of the great ſin of great cities? The vile ſewer, the offenſive factory chimney, the ſqualid ſuburb tell their own tale very clearly. The girl with hardened look and falſe, imprinted ſmile, tells one no leſs ominous of evil.

In fact I do not know any one thing which concentrates and reflects more accurately the evils of any ſociety than this ſin. It is a meaſure of the want of employment, the uncertainty of employment, the moral corruption amongſt the higher claſſes, the want of education amongſt the lower, the relaxation of bonds between maſter and ſervant, employer and employed; and, indeed, it expreſſes the want of prudence, truth, light and love in that community.

In conſidering any evil, our thoughts may be claſſed under three heads, the nature of it,

the cauſes of it, the remedies for it. Often the diſcuſſion of any one of theſe great branches of the ſubject involves the other two; and it becomes difficult to divide them without pedantry. But in general, we may, for convenience, attend to ſuch a diviſion of the ſubject.

I. The Nature.

The nature of the evil in this caſe is one which does not require to be largely dwelt upon; and yet ſeveral things muſt be ſaid about it. One which occurs to me is the degradation of race. Thouſands upon thouſands of beautiful women are by it condemned to ſterility. As a nation we ſhould look with exceeding jealouſy and alarm at any occupation which claimed our talleſt men and left them without offſpring. And, ſurely, it is no light matter in a national point of view that any ſin ſhould claim the right of conſuming, ſometimes as rapidly as if they were a ſlave population, a conſiderable number of the beſt looking perſons in the community.

How ſlight, however, is the phyſical degradation compared with the mental degradation cauſed by this ſin: and here I do not mean

only the diſhonour of the individuals, but the large ſocial injury which the mere exiſtence of ſuch a thing cauſes. For it accuſtoms men to the contemplation of the greateſt ſocial failures, and introduces habitually a low view of the higheſt things. We are apt to look at each individual caſe too harſhly; but the whole thing is not looked at gravely enough. This often happens in conſidering any great ſocial abuſe; and ſo we frequently commence the remedy by ſome great injuſtice in a particular caſe.

In appreciating the nature of this evil, the feelings of the people concerned with it are a large part of the ſubject. On the one ſide are ſhame, pride, dejection, reſtleſſneſs, hopeleſſneſs and a ſenſe of ill-uſage reſulting in a bitter effrontery, a mean heartleſſneſs, and a godleſs remorſe. As a mere matter of ſtateſmanſhip ſuch a claſs requires to be looked to as pre-eminently dangerous. On the other ſide, is often the meanneſs without the ſhame; and a permanent coarſeneſs and unholineſs of mind is inflicted upon the ſex that moſt requires refinement and ſpirituality in the affections.

To return, however, to a conſideration of the feelings of the poor women, it may be noticed that they have an exceſſive fear of being left alone with their own recollections, which is, no doubt, a great obſtacle to their being reclaimed. Withal there is ſomething very grand though ſad, that one of the main obſtacles to outward improvement lies in the intenſity of ſhame for the wrong-doing, in a dumb but profound remorſe. You may ſee ſimilar feelings operating very variouſly among the greateſt men whoſe ſpiritual ſtate is at all known to us. Poor Luther exclaims "When I am aſſailed with "heavy tribulations, I ruſh out among my "pigs, rather than remain alone by myſelf. "The human heart is like a millſtone in a "mill; when you put wheat under it, it turns "and grinds and bruiſes the wheat to flour; if "you put no wheat, it ſtill grinds on, but then "it is itſelf it grinds and wears away."

Certainly the Goſpel ſeems eſpecially given to meet theſe caſes of remorſe and to prevent deſpair (not the tempter but the ſlave-driver to ſo many crimes) from having an unjuſt and irreligious hold, not ſo much on men's fears as on their fancies—eſpecially their notions of per-

fection as regards themſelves. For I doubt not but that men and women much lower down in the ſcale of cultivation and ſenſibility than we imagine, are haunted by a ſenſe of their own fall from what they feel and think they ought to have been.

The Causes.

The main cauſe of this ſin on the woman's part is want—abſolute want. This, though one of the moſt grievous things to contemplate, has at the ſame time a large admixture of hope in it. For, ſurely, if civilization is to make any ſufficient anſwer for itſelf and for the many ſerious evils it promotes, it ought to be, that it renders the viciſſitudes of life leſs extreme, that it provides a reſource for all of us againſt exceſſive want. Hitherto we have not ſucceeded in making it do ſo, but it is contended and with apparent juſtice, that it acts better in this reſpect than ſavage life. At any rate, to return to the main courſe of my argument, it is more ſatisfactory to hear that this evil is a reſult, on one ſide at leaſt, of want rather than of depravity.

The next great cauſe is in the over-rigid views and opinions, eſpecially as againſt women, expreſſed in reference to unchaſtity. Chriſtianity has been in ſome meaſure to blame for this; though, if rightly applied, it would have been the ſureſt cure. "Publicans and ſinners!" Such did He prefer before the company of phariſees and hypocrites. Theſe latter, however, have been in great credit ever ſince; and, for my part, I ſee no end to their being pronounced for ever the choice ſociety of the world.

The virtuous, carefully tended and carefully brought up, ought to bethink themſelves how little they may owe to their own merit that they are virtuous, for it is in the evil concurrence of bad diſpoſition and maſterleſs opportunity that crime comes. Of courſe to an evil-diſpoſed mind, opportunity will never be wanting; but, when one perſon or claſs of perſons is from circumſtances peculiarly expoſed to temptation, and goes wrong, it is no great ſtretch of charity for others to conclude that that perſon, or claſs, did not begin with worſe diſpoſitions than they themſelves who are ſtill without a ſtain. This is very obvious; but it is to be obſerved that the reaſoning powers which are

very prompt in maſtering any ſimple ſcientific propoſition, experience a wonderful halting in their logic when applied to the furtherance of charity.

There is a very homely proverb about the fate of the pitcher that goes often to the water which might be an aid to charity, and which bears cloſely on the preſent caſe. The Spaniards, from whom I dare ſay we have the proverb, expreſs it prettily and pithily.

" Cantarillo que muchas vezes va a la fuente,
" O dexa la aſa, o la frente."

" The little pitcher that goes often to the fountain, either leaves the handle, or the ſpout, behind ſome day."

The dainty vaſe which is kept under a glaſs caſe in a drawing-room, ſhould not be too proud of remaining without a flaw, conſidering its great advantages.

In the New Teſtament we have ſuch matters treated in a truly divine manner. There is no palliation of crime. Sometimes our charity is mixed up with a maſh of ſentiment and fickly feeling that we do not know where we are, and what is vice and what is virtue. But here are the brief ſtern words " Go, and ſin no more ;"

but, at the ſame time, there is an infinite conſideration for the criminal, not however as criminal, but as human being; I mean not in reſpect of her criminality but of her humanity.

Now an inſtance of our want of obedience to theſe Chriſtian precepts has often ſtruck me in the not viſiting married women whoſe previous lives will not bear inſpection. Whoſe will? Not merely all Chriſtian people, but all civilized people, ought to ſet their faces againſt this exceſſive retroſpection.

But if ever there were an occaſion on which men (I ſay men but I mean more eſpecially women) ſhould be careful of ſcattering abroad unjuſt and ſevere ſayings, it is in ſpeaking of the frailties and delinquencies of women. For it is one of thoſe things where an unjuſt judgment, or the fear of one, breaks down the bridge behind the repentant; and has often made an error into a crime, and a ſingle crime into a life of crime.

A daughter has left her home, madly, ever ſo wickedly if you like, but what are too often the demons tempting her onwards and preventing her return? The uncharitable ſpeeches ſhe has heard at home; and the feeling ſhe

ſhares with moſt of us, that thoſe we have lived with are the ſharpeſt judges of our conduct.

Would you, then, exclaims ſome reader or hearer, take back and receive with tenderneſs a daughter who had erred? "Yes," I reply, "if ſhe had been the moſt abandoned woman upon earth."

A fooliſh family pride often adds to this uncharitable way of feeling and ſpeaking which I venture to reprehend. Our care is not that an evil and an unfortunate thing has happened, but that our family has been diſgraced, as we call it. Family vanity mixes up with and exaſperates rigid virtue. Good Heavens, if we could but ſee where diſgrace really lies; how often men would be aſhamed of their riches and their honours; and would diſcern that a bad temper, or an irritable diſpoſition, was the greateſt family diſgrace that they poſſeſſed.

A fear of the uncharitable ſpeeches of others is the incentive in many courſes of evil; but it has a peculiar effect in the one we are conſidering, as it occurs with moſt force juſt at the moſt critical period—when the victim of ſeduction is upon the point of falling into worſe ways. Then it is that the uncharitable ſpeeches

ſhe has heard on this ſubject in former days are ſo many goads to her, urging her the downward path of evil. What a ſtrange deſperate notion it is of men, when they have erred, that things are at the worſt, that nothing can be done to reſcue them: whereas Judas Iſcariot might have done ſomething better than hang himſelf.

But if we were all ſo kind, exclaims ſome rigid man, we ſhould only encourage the evil we wiſh to ſubdue. He does not ſee that the firſt ſtep in evil and the abandonment to it as a courſe of life proceed moſtly from totally different motives, and are totally different things. One who dwelt on a ſecure height of peace and virtue, has fallen ſadly and come down upon a table-land plagued with ſtorms and liable to attacks of all kinds, and from which there is no aſcent to the height again; but which is ſtill at an immenſe diſtance above a certain abyſs: and we ſhould be very cautious of doing anything that might make the fooliſh, dejected, pride-led perſon plunge hopeleſſly down into the abyſs, in all probability, to be loſt for ever.

Before quitting the ſubject of the family, I

may notice that independently of any harſhneſs of remark which a young perſon may have been accuſtomed to hear on matters connected with our preſent ſubject, we muſt put down the ill-management of parents as one of the moſt common cauſes of this ſin. It is very ſad to be obliged to ſay this, but the thing is true and muſt be ſaid. We muſt not, however, be too much diſcouraged at this, for the truth is, that to perform well any one of the great relations of life is an immenſe difficulty; and when we ſee on a tomb-ſtone (thoſe underneath can now ſay nothing to the contrary) that the defunct was a good huſband, father, and ſon, we may conclude, if the words were truthful, that we are paſſing by the mortal remains of an admirable Crichton in morality. And theſe relations are the more difficult, as they are not to be completely fulfilled by an abnegation of ſelf, in other words by a weak giving way upon all points, which is the ruin of many a perſon. I am not, however, going in this particular caſe, to ſpeak of the ſpoiling of children in the ordinary ſenſe, but rather of the contrary defect, which, ſtrange to ſay, is quite as common, if not more ſo. Of neceſſity the ages of parents and children are ſeparated by a conſiderable in-

terval; the particular relation is one full of awe and authority; and the effect of that diſparity of years and of that natural awe and authority may eaſily by harſh or ungenial parents be ſtrained too far: other perſons and the world in general (not caring for the welfare of thoſe who are no children of theirs, and beſides uſing the juſt courteſy towards ſtrangers) are often tolerant when parents are not ſo, which puts them to a great diſadvantage; ſmall matters are often needleſſly made ſubjects of daily comment and blame; and, in the end, it comes that home is ſometimes anything but the happy place we chooſe to make it out in ſongs and fictions of various kinds. This, when it occurs, is a great pity. I am for making home very happy to children if it can be managed, which of courſe is not to be made by weak compliances, and having no fixed rules. For no creature is happy, or even free, as Goethe has pointed out, except in the circuit of law. But once having laid down laws and regulations, all within thoſe bounds ſhould be very kind at home. Now liſten to the captious querulous ſcoldings that you may hear, even as you go along the ſtreets, addreſſed by parents to children, is it not manifeſt that in after life

there will be too much fear in the children's minds, and a belief that their father and mother never will ſympathiſe with them as others even might, never will forgive them. People of all claſſes, high and low, err in the ſame way; and in looking about the world, I have ſometimes thought that a thoroughly judicious father is one of the rareſt creatures to be met with.

Another cauſe of the frailty of women in the lower claſſes is in the comparative inelegance and uncleanlineſs of the men in their own claſs. It alſo ariſes from the fondneſs which all women have for merit, or what they ſuppoſe to be ſuch, ſo that their love is apt to follow what is in any way diſtinguiſhed: and this throws the women of any claſs cruelly open to the ſeductions of the men in the claſs above. For women are the real ariſtocrats; and it is one of their greateſt merits. Men's intellects, even ſome of the brighteſt, may occaſionally be deceived by theories about equality and the like, but women who look at reality more, are rarely led away by nonſenſe of this kind.

A cauſe of this ſin of a very different kind, and applying to men, is a dreadful notion which has occaſionally been adopted in theſe latter

ages, namely, that it is a fine thing for a man to have gone through a great deal of vice—to have had much perſonal experience of wickedneſs—in ſhort, that knowledge of vice is knowledge of the world, and that ſuch knowledge of the world is eminently uſeful. That is not the way in which the greateſt thinkers read the world; they tell us that

> "The Gods approve the depth and not the tumult of the ſoul."

Self-reſtraint is the grand thing, is the great tutor.

But let us not talk inſincerely even for a good end, as we may ſuppoſe: and therefore do not let us deny that every evil carries with it its teachings. An indulgence in diſſipation teaches that diſſipation is a fatal thing: and the man who learns that, very often does not learn anything more. But the excellence of particular men muſt greatly conſiſt in their appreciating truths without having to pay the full experience for them; ſo that in thoſe reſpects they have a great ſtart of other men. However, whether theſe theories of mine be true or not, there can be no doubt, I think, that indulgence of any kind is a thing which

requires no theory to ſupport it: and I do not think it will be found that the men of conſummate knowledge of the world have gained that knowledge by vice; but rather, as all other knowledge is gained, by toil and truth and love and ſelf-reſtraint. And theſe four things do not abide with vice.

Probably, too, a low view of humanity which vice gives, is in itſelf the greateſt barrier to the higheſt knowledge.

One great ſource of the ſin we are conſidering is the want of other thoughts. Here puritaniſm comes in, as it has any time theſe two hundred years, to darken and deepen every miſchief. The lower orders here are left with ſo little to think of but labour and vice. Now any grand thought, great poetry, or noble ſong is adverſe to any abuſe of the paſſions—even that which ſeems moſt concerned with the paſſions. For all that is great in idea, that inſiſts upon men's attention, does ſo by an appeal, expreſſed or implied, to the infinite within him and around him. A man coming from a great repreſentation of Macbeth is not in the humour for a low intrigue: and, in general, vice, eſpecially of the kind we are conſidering, ſeizes hold not of

the paſſionate, ſo much as of the cold and vacant mind.

On this account education and cultivation are to be looked to as potent remedies. The pleaſures of the poor will be found to be moral ſafeguards rather than dangers. I ſmile ſometimes when I think of the preacher in ſome remote country place imploring his hearers not to give way to backbiting, not to indulge in low ſenſuality, and not to buſy themſelves with other people's affairs. Meanwhile what are they to do if they do not concern themſelves with ſuch things? The heavy ploughboy who lounges along in that liſtleſs manner has a mind which moves with a rapidity that bears no relation to that outward heavineſs of his. That mind will be fed; will conſume all about it, like oxygen, if new thoughts and aſpirations are not given it. The true ſtrategy in attacking any vice, is by putting in a virtue to counteract it; in attacking any evil thought, by putting in a good thought to meet it. Thus a man is lifted into a higher ſtate of being, and his old ſlough falls off him.

With women, too, there is this eſpecial danger that fiction has hitherto been apt to tell

them that they are nothing if they are not loved, and to fill their heads with the moſt untrue views of human life. Fiction muſt try and learn that ſhe is only Truth with a maſk on, ſo that ſhe may ſpeak truer things ſometimes with leſs offence than Truth herſelf. Fiction muſt not repreſent love as always ſuch a very fine thing, or as tending invariably to felicity, thus ignoring the trials of wedded life, and of affection generally—as if life were cut into two parts, one all ſhade, the other all light. We cannot ſchool Love much; but ſometimes he might be induced to liſten to reaſon. And at any rate all would agree that much miſchief may be done by unſound repreſentations of human life in this very important reſpect.

But, our antagoniſt may ſay, theſe very fictions are amuſement and ſo far of uſe as furniſhing ſome food for the mind. Yes: and I am not prepared to ſay that bad fictions or almoſt anything may not be better than nothing for the mind. But when continuous cultivation is joined to education, (which ſhould be *the* object for ſtateſmen and governing people of all kinds) people will not be ſuppoſed to be educated at the time of their nonage, and then left ſight of and hold of for evermore, as far

as regards their betters. But it will be ſeen that we are all ſo far children, or at leaſt like children in ſome reſpects, throughout our lives, that the means of cultivation ſhould be ſucceſſively offered to us.

It is difficult to ſee the drift of the foregoing words without an example. But what I mean is this—do not let us merely teach our poor young people to read and write and hear about all manner of arts, ſciences and productions, and then dropping theſe young people at the moſt dangerous age, provide no amuſements, enable them to carry on no purſuits, throw open no refinements of life to them, ſhew them no parks, no gardens, and leave them to the pothouſe and their ſordid homes.

Of courſe they will go wrong if we do.

Remedies.

As poverty came firſt among the cauſes, ſo to remove it muſt come firſt among the remedies. For this purpoſe let it be carefully obſerved what claſs of perſons furniſhes moſt victims to this ſin. Try and mend the evils of that claſs.

There will be two kinds of poverty, the one arifing from general inadequacy of pay for employment that is pretty conftant; the other from uncertainty of employment at particular periods. Each requires to be dealt with differently. Frequently though they are found combined.

To meet the firft of thefe evils more work muft be found in the country, or fome hands muft be removed out of it.

If emigration is to be adopted, it fhould be done in a different manner from any that has yet been attempted.

But it feems as if fomething better than, or befides, emigration might be attempted.

It may feem romantic, but I cannot help hoping that confiderable inveftigation into prices may lead people to afcertain better what are fair wages, and that purchafers will not run madly after cheapnefs. There are every where juft men who endeavour to prevent the price of labourers' wages from falling below what they (the juft men) think right. I have no doubt that this has an effect upon the whole labour-market, Chriftianity coming in to correct political economy. And fo, in other matters, I can conceive that private perfons may generally

become more anxious to put aſide the evils of competition, and to give, as well as get, what is fair.

But many things might be done to enable the wages of the poor to go further: and ſurely the glory of a ſtate, and of the principal people in it, ſhould be that men make the moſt of their labour in that ſtate.

Improvement of dwellings is one means.*

Improvements in the repreſentation and transfer of property are other great means to this end.

It may ſeem that I have wandered far from the ſubject (the great ſin of great cities) to queſtions of currency and transfer of property. But I am perſuaded that there is the cloſeſt connexion between ſubjects of this kind. The

* Many a workwoman earns but 7*s.* a week. She has to pay 3*s.*, or 3*s.* 6*d.* for one miſerable apartment. Take her food at 3*s.* or 2*s.* 6*d.*; and there will remain 1*s.* a week to provide for clothing, ſickneſs, charity, pleaſure and miſcellaneous expenditure of all kinds. It is eaſy to ſee that any ſudden miſhap, ſuch as ſickneſs, muſt wreck ſuch a perſon's means; and alſo that where the chief room for making theſe means go further, is in reducing the expenditure for lodgings, which now conſumes about half her earnings.

inveſtment of ſavings is ſurely a queſtion of the higheſt importance. But it is not only that which I mean. All manner of facilities ſhould be given to the poor to become owners of property; and wherever it could be managed, almoſt in ſpite of themſelves, they ſhould be made ſo: that is, by putting by portions of their wages when it is manifeſtly poſſible for this to be done, as in the caſe of domeſtic ſervants or where the employed are living with, or in ſome meaſure under the guidance of, their employers.

Much is being attempted by various benevolent perſons in ways of this kind or ſimilar to it; and the greateſt attention ſhould be paid to theſe experiments.

There are various things which the State could do in theſe matters; but it would require a very wiſe and great government: and how is ſuch a thing to be got? In the act of riſing to power men fail to obtain the knowledge and thought, and eſpecially the purpoſe, to uſe power. There is ſome Eaſtern proverb, I think, about the meaneſt reptiles being found at the top of the higheſt towers. That, as applied to government, is ill-natured and utterly

untrue. But people who are ſwarming up a difficult aſcent, or maintaining themſelves with difficulty on a narrow ledge at a great height, are not employed exactly in the way to become great philoſophers and reformers of mankind. Conſtitutional governments may be great bleſſings, but nobody can doubt that they have their price. There are, however, excellent men in high places amongſt us at the preſent moment; but timidity in attempting good is their portion eſpecially by any way that has not become thoroughly invincible in argument. I ſuppoſe the man who was to try ſome very generous thing as a ſtateſman and were to fail, would be irretrievably loſt as a ſtateſman.

Meanwhile ſocialiſm is put forward to fill the void of government: and if government does not make exertion, we may yet have dire things to encounter. By government in the foregoing ſentence I mean not only what we are in the habit of calling ſuch, but all the governing and directing perſons in a nation. Some of them are certainly making great efforts even now, and there lies our hope.

But, ſuppoſing that the ſupply of workmen and workwomen could be better adapted to the

demand; and that means could be found to provide in ſome meaſure for neutralizing the ill effects of the uncertainty of employment (which two things though very difficult are ſtill not beyond the range of human endeavour and accompliſhment) there would yet remain many, very many, individual caſes of utter and ſudden diſtreſs and deſtitution amongſt young women which form the chief cauſes of their fall. Now how are theſe to be averted?

There ſhould be ſome better means of intercommunication between rich and poor than there is at preſent. It ſeems as if the prieſts of all religions might perform that function, and that it ſhould be conſidered one of their moſt important functions. It ſhould be done, if poſſible, by ſome perſons who come amongſt the poor for other purpoſes than to relieve their poverty. At the ſame time there might be an adminiſtrative officer of high place and power in the government who ſhould be on the alert to ſuggeſt and promote good offices of the kind I have juſt alluded to. In reality the Miniſter of education (if we had one) would be the real miniſter for deſtitution, as doing moſt to prevent it; and various minor duties of a humane kind might devolve upon him.

Any one acquainted with the annals of the poor will tell how familiar ſuch words are to him as the following, and how true on enquiry he has found them. "Father fell ill of the fever, (*the* fever the poor girl may well ſay, for it is *the* fever which want of air and water, and working in ſtifling rooms has brought upon many thouſands of our workmen) Mother and I did pretty well in the ſtraw-bonnet line while ſhe lived; but ſhe died come April two years: and I've been moſt ſtarved ſince then, and took to thoſe ways."

"You were fifteen when your mother died, you ſay, and you have no relations in this town?"

"There is my little brother and he is in the Workhouſe, and they let me go and ſee him on Mondays, and there is my Aunt, but ſhe is a very poor woman and lives a long, long way off, and has a many children of her own."

"You can read and write?"

"I can read a little."

Now of courſe there are thouſands of caſes of this kind in which one feels that the poor child has ſlipped out of the notice and care of people who would have been but too glad to

aid her. I dare ſay neither mother nor child ever went to any church or chapel. And, in truth, let us be honeſt and confeſs that going to church in England is ſomewhat of an operation, eſpecially to a poor, ill-clad perſon. This ſyſtem of pews and places, the want of openneſs of churches, the length of the ſervice reſulting from the admixture of ſervices, the air of over-cleanlineſs and reſpectability which beſet the place, and the difficulty of getting out when you like, are ſad hindrances to the poor, the ill-dreſſed, the ſick, the timid, the faſtidious, the wicked and the cultivated.

And then there is nobody into whoſe ear the poor girl can pour her troubles, *except ſhe comes as a beggar.* This will be ſaid to be a leaning on my part to the confeſſional. I cannot help that, I muſt ſpeak the truth that is in me. And I wiſh that many amongſt us Proteſtants, who would, I doubt not, welcome the duty, could, without pledging ourſelves to all manner of doctrines, but merely by a genial uſe of thoſe common relations of life which bring us in daily contact with the poor, fulfil much of what is genuinely good in the functions of a confeſſor, and thus become brothers of mercy and brothers of charity to the poor.

Meanwhile it is paſt melancholy, and verges on deſpair, to reflect what is going on amongſt miniſters of religion who are often but too intent upon the fopperies of religion to have heart and time for the ſubſtantial work entruſted to them—immerſed in heart-breaking traſh from which no ſect is free; for here are fopperies of diſcipline, there fopperies of doctrine (ſtill more dangerous as it ſeems to me). And yet there are theſe words reſounding in their ears, "Pure religion and undefiled is this, to viſit the fatherleſs and widows in their affliction and to keep oneſelf unſpotted from the world." And the word "world," as Coleridge has well explained, is this order of things, the order of things you are in. Clerical niceneſs and over-ſanctity, for inſtance, and making more and longer ſermons than there is any occaſion for, and inſiſting upon needleſs points of doctrine, and making Chriſtianity a ſtumbling-block to many, that, excellent clergymen, for there are numbers who deſerve the name, that is your world, there lies your temptation to err.

It has occurred to me that ſchoolmaſters and ſchoolmiſtreſſes would form good means of communication with the poor: and ſo much

the better as they would be an indirect means as regards worldly affairs; * I mean that their first business is not to care for the physical well-being of their pupils. In after life, they would be likely to know something of the ways and modes of life of their former pupils, and would be most valuable auxiliaries to landlords, master-manufacturers, to masters in general and to all who are anxious to improve the condition of those under them.

While talking of the schoolmaster, we must not omit to consider the immense importance, in its bearing on our subject, of a better education for women: especially for women of what are called the middling classes—an education which should develope in them the qualities and powers which by nature they are most deficient in, such as stern reasoning which is at

* In this respect the opportunities of medical men are very great; and surely the medical profession best emancipates itself from any tendency to materialism and dignifies itself by entering upon the duties and the privileges of a teacher and consoler, when it performs, as it very often does, some of those offices of charity which ever lie just under its hands.

the foundation of juſtice, and which ſhould free them from that abſurd timidity of *mind* more than of body which prevents their ſeeing things as they are, and makes them, and conſequently men, the victims of conventionality.

This thing, conventionality, is a great enemy to thoſe who would war againſt the ſin we are conſidering. Hypocriſy is ſaid to be the homage which vice pays to virtue; conventionality is the adoration which both vice and virtue offer up to worldlineſs. See its ill effects in this particular caſe. The diſcuſſion of our ſubject is almoſt beyond the pale of conventionality. Years ago, an old College friend defined this preſent writer as a man who could ſay the moſt audacious things with the leaſt offence. I hope my friend was right, for, indeed, in diſcuſſing this ſubject I need all that power now. Conventionality ſtiffens up the whole figure and ſets the eyes in the fixed direction it pleaſes, ſo that men and women can paſs through the ſtreets ignoring the greateſt horrors which ſurround them. And conſider, what a dangerous thing it is, when it is once preſumed that there is any claſs with whom we can have

no ſympathy; that there are any beings of a different kind from the reſt of us. It is not for us, collections of duſt, to feel contempt. In a future life we may have ſuch a ſurvey as may juſtify contempt, but then we ſhould have too much love to feel it. But, indeed, in moſt caſes it is not contempt, but conventionality, that induces us to paſs by and ignore what it is not conſiſtent with good taſte to know any thing about.

But there is another fertile mode in which conventionality works in increaſing the great ſin of great cities. And that is by rendering all manner of imaginary wants real wants, and thus helping to enſlave men and women. Falſe ſhame has often, I doubt not, led to the worſt conſequences—the ſhame for inſtance ariſing from not having the clothes of a kind imagined to be fit for a particular ſtation: and ſo, people put on a vice to ſatisfy a foible.

A claſs of perſons who are found to furniſh great numbers of the victims to the ſin we are conſidering is that of domeſtic ſervants. This leads to a ſuſpicion that there are peculiar temptations, weakneſſes, errors and miſmanagement

incident to that claſs. To begin with, their education is wretchedly defective. But beſides that, they are particularly liable to the ſlavery of conventionality: indeed there are few people more ſubdued by weak notions of what it is correct for them to have and to be and to do: which often ends in anything but a correſpondence of the reality of their condition with their ideal. It muſt be remembered, too, that they undergo in an eſpecial degree the temptation of being brought near to a claſs ſuperior to theirs in breeding and niceneſs; and conſequently that they are very liable to be diſcontented with their own.

But great improvement might be made in the management of ſervants. Their efforts to ſave money ſhould be directed and aided. New means might be invented for that purpoſe. It might be much more generally arranged than it is both in houſeholds and in other eſtabliſhments that a fund ſhould be formed out of which thoſe female ſervants who remained a certain time ſhould have a ſum of money, in fact what in official life is called "retired allowances."

Then of courſe maſters and miſtreſſes ſhould

recognize the fact, inſtead of needleſſly diſcouraging it, that men and women love one another in all ranks—that Mary, if a pleaſant or comely girl, is pretty nearly ſure at ſome time or other to have a lover. Let the maſter and miſtreſs be aware of that fact, and treat it as an open queſtion which may be diſcuſſed ſometimes with advantage to all parties.

Inſtead of ſuch conduct, one hears ſometimes that ſuch maxims are laid down as that "no followers are allowed." What does a lady mean who lays down ſuch a law in her houſehold. Perhaps ſhe ſubſcribes to ſome abolition ſociety, which is a good thing in as far as it cultivates her kindly feelings towards an injured race. But does ſhe know by this law of hers as applied to her own houſehold, ſhe is imitating in a humble way one of the worſt things connected with ſlavery?

As this prohibition extends to near relations as well as to lovers, if obeyed it renders the poſition of a ſervant girl ſtill more perilous as more iſolated; and if diſobeyed, it is a fertile ſource of the habit of concealment, one of the worſt to which all perſons in a ſubordinate ſituation are ſubject.

For my own part I could not bear to live with ſervants who were to ſee none of their friends and relations: I ſhould feel I was keeping a priſon and not ruling a houſehold.

Amongſt the principal remedies muſt be reckoned, or at leaſt hoped for, an improvement in men as regards this ſin. To hope for ſuch an improvement will be looked upon as chimerical by ſome perſons, and the notion of introducing great moral remedies for the evil in queſtion as wholly romantic. It ſeems impoſſible: every new and great thing does, till it is done; and then the only wonder is that it was not done long ago.

Oh that there were more love in the world, and then theſe things that we deplore could not be. One would think that the man who had once loved any woman, would have ſome tenderneſs for all. And love implies an infinite reſpect. All that was ſaid or done by Chivalry of old, or ſung by Troubadours, but ſhadows forth the feeling which is in the heart of any one who loves. Love, like the opening of the heavens to the Saints, ſhows for a moment, even to the dulleſt man, the poſſibilities of the

human race. He has faith, hope, and charity for another being, perhaps but a creation of his imagination: ſtill it is a great advance for a man to be profoundly loving even in his imaginations. What Shelley makes Apollo exclaim, Love might well ſay too.

> " I am the eye with which the Univerſe
> Beholds itſelf and knows itſelf divine;
> All harmony of inſtrument or verſe,
> All prophecy, all medicine are mine,
> All light of art or nature;—to my ſong
> Victory and praiſe in their own right belong."

Indeed love is a thing ſo deep and ſo beautiful, that each man feels that nothing but conceits and pretty words have been ſaid about it by other men.

And then to come down from this and to diſhonour the image of the thing ſo loved. No man could do ſo while the memory of love was in his mind. And, indeed, even without theſe recollections, we might hope that on the contemplation of ſo much ruin, and the conſideration of the exquiſite beauty of the thing ſpoiled, there would ſometimes come upon the heart of a man a pity ſo deep as to protect him from this ſin as much as averſion itſelf could do. And we may imagine that even men of outra-

geous diſſipation, but who have ſtill left ſome greatneſs and fineneſs of mind (like Mirabeau for example) will have a horror of the ſin we are condemning, though very ſinful in other reſpects. And certainly the diſgrace to humanity that there is in indiſcriminate proſtitution is appalling: and like conſtrained marriage for money, it has ſomething more repulſive about it than is to be met with in things that may be eſſentially more wicked.

I hope I am not uncharitable in ſaying this; but anybody who thinks ſo muſt remember that what is alluded to by me is the worſt form of the ſin in queſtion; as in fact it diſgraces the ſtreets of our principal cities—in utter loveleſſneſs and mercenary reckleſſneſs.

I ſaid above, "the exquiſite beauty of the thing ſpoiled." And, in truth, how beautiful a thing is youth—beautiful in an animal. In contemplating it, the world ſeems young again for us. Each young thing ſeems born to new hopes. Parents feel this for their children, hoping that ſomething will happen to them quite different from what happened to themſelves, elſe could they take all the pains they do with theſe young creatures, if they could believe

that the young people were only to grow up into middle-aged men and women with the uſual cares and troubles deſcending upon them like a ſecurely entailed inheritance. There is ſomething fanciful in all this, and in reality a grown up perſon is a much more valuable and worthy creature than moſt young ones: but ſtill anything that blights the young muſt ever be moſt repugnant to humanity.

I had now read over all that I had put down in writing; and, as I laid aſide the manuſcript, I felt how ſadly it fell ſhort of what I had thought to ſay on this ſubject. I ſuppoſe, however, that even when they are good, a man's words ſeem poor to himſelf, like the aſpect of the remains of a feaſt to the maſter of a houſe. Much muſt always lie in the ear of the hearer. We ſay enough to ſet alight the hidden trains of thought which abide in the receſſes of men's hearts, unknown to them; and they are ſtartled into thinking for themſelves. After all, is not often ſo requiſite for a writer to make things logically clear to men, as to put them into the mood he wiſhes to have them in. I ſuppoſe the ſnake-charmer and the horſe-whiſperer have ſome ſuch ſcheme.

But ſaid I, as I threw ſome ſtones into a pool which was near me in a partial clearing of the wood, I would go on with this work if I knew that all my efforts would make no more ſtir than theſe pebbles in that pool. And then I proceeded to think of the topics which are yet before me, full of doubt and difficulty. I ſhould like to have ſome talk with Elleſmere, I exclaimed; I fear he will have no ſympathy with me and an utter diſbelief in anybody doing any good in this matter. But he is a ſhrewd man of the world, and he ſpeaks out fearleſſly. It would be well to hear his remarks beforehand, while they may yet be of uſe to me. I certainly will conſult him.

I ſtept out of the wood into the beaten road, a change which I always feel to be like that which occurs in the mind of a man who having been wrapt in ſome romance of his own, ſuddenly diſengages himſelf from it and talks with his fellows upon the ordinary topics of the day, affecting a ſhrewd care about the price of corn and the ſtate of our foreign relations.

By the time I reached Worth-Aſhton I had left all foreſt thoughts well behind me, and was quite at home on the broad beaten road of common-place affairs.

CHAPTER VII.

I HAVE read the foregoing notes to Elleſmere, whom I aſked to come here the firſt lawyer's holiday that he could make. During the reading, which was in my Study, he ſaid nothing, but ſeemed, as I thought, unuſually grave and attentive. When it was finiſhed, he propoſed that we ſhould walk out upon the downs. Still he made no remark, but ſtrolled on moodily, until I ſaid to him, "I am afraid, Elleſmere, you have ſome heavy brief which ſits upon your mind juſt now; or, perhaps, I have ſomewhat wearied you in reading ſo much to you upon a ſubject about which you probably do not care much." "I care more than you do," he replied—"forgive my abruptneſs, Milverton, but what I ſay is true. To ſhow you why I do care would be to tell you a long

ſtory and to betray to you that which I had never intended to tell mortal man.

" But if you care to hear it I will tell you; it bears cloſely upon ſome of your views and may do ſome good to them. I can talk to you on ſuch a theme better than to almoſt any man, for it is like talking to a philoſophic ſyſtem, and yet there is ſtill ſome humanity left in you, ſo that one may hope for a little ſympathy now and then without having too much, or being afflicted with pity and wonder and fooliſh exclamations of any kind." I did not interrupt him to defend myſelf, being too anxious to hear what he had to ſay. Beſides I ſaw this attack upon me was partly an excuſe to himſelf for telling me ſomething which he hardly meant to tell. He threw himſelf down upon the turf, and after a few minutes ſilence, thus began.

Well, I was once upon my travels ſtaying for a few days in a German town, not a very obſcure or a very renowned one; but indeed the whereabouts is a very unimportant matter, and I do not particularize any of the minute circumſtances of my ſtory, becauſe I do not wiſh

hereafter to be reminded of them. I remember it was on a Sunday, and the day was fine. I remember, too, I went to church, to a Proteſtant church, where I did not underſtand much of what I heard, but liked what I did. They ſang pſalms, ſuch as I fancy Luther would have approved of; and I thought it would be a ſerious thing for an hoſtile army to meet a body of men who had been thus ſinging. Grand muſic, ſuch as you, for inſtance, would like better, is a good thing too. Our cathedrals might have combined both. I do not know why I tell you all this for it does not immediately concern my ſtory, but I ſuppoſe it is becauſe I do not like to approach it too quickly, and I muſt linger on the details of a day which is ſo deeply imprinted upon my memory. I remember well the ſermon, or rather the bits of it which I underſtood, and out of which I made my ſermon for myſelf. That pathetic word *verloren* (loſt) occurred many times. Then there was a great deal about the cares of this life occupying ſo much time, and then about the pleaſures, or the thoughts, of miſpent youth being impreſſed upon manhood, to the perennial detriment of the character. I made out,

or fancied I did, that it was a ſermon ſhowing how ſhort a time was given to ſpiritual life. I dareſay it was a very common-place ſermon that I made of it; but ſomehow, the ſermons we preach to ourſelves, in which by the way we can be ſure of taking the moſt apt illuſtrations from the ſtore of our own follies, are always intereſting. And when the good preacher, a moſt benign and apoſtolic-looking man, pronounced the benediction, I felt as if I had been hearing ſome friendly ſearching words which might well be laid to heart. After the ſermon was over, I ſtrolled about. The day moved on, and towards evening time, I went with the ſtream of the townſpeople gentle and ſimple, to ſome public gardens which lay outſide the town and were joined to it by beautiful walks. People ſpeak of the ſadneſs of being in a crowd and knowing no one. There is ſomething pleaſureable in it too. I wandered amongſt the various groups of quiet, decorous, beer-imbibing Germans who in family-parties had come out to theſe gardens to drink their beer, ſmoke their pipes and hear ſome muſic. In thoſe fortunate regions they have not made a ghaſtly idol of the Sunday.

At laſt I ſat down at a table where a young girl, a middle-aged woman and a baby were refreſhing themſelves with ſome very thin potation. They looked poor decent people. I ſoon entered into converſation with them, and therefore did not leave it long a matter of doubt that I was an Engliſhman. I perceived that ſomething was wrong with my friends, although I could not comprehend what it was. I could ſee that the girl could hardly reſtrain herſelf from burſting out into tears; and there was ſomething quite comical in the delight ſhe expreſſed at ſome feats on the tight-rope, which ſhe would inſiſt upon my looking at, and her then in a minute afterwards returning to her quiet diſtreſs and anxious deplorable countenance. A proud Engliſh girl would have kept all her miſery under due control, eſpecially in a public-place; but theſe Germans are a more ſimple natural people.

Having by degrees eſtabliſhed ſome relations between the party and myſelf by ordering ſome coffee and handing it round, and then letting the baby play with my watch, I aſked what it was that ailed the girl. The girl turned round and poured out a torrent of eloquence which,

however, conſiderably exceeding the pace at which any foreign language enters into my apprehenſion, was totally loſt upon me, except that I perceived ſhe had ſome complaint againſt ſomebody, and that ſhe had a noble open countenance which, from long experience of the witneſs-box, I felt was telling me an unuſual proportion of truth. One part of the diſcourſe I perceived very clearly to be about money, and as ſhe touched her gown (which was very neat and nice) it had ſomething to do with the price of the ſaid gown.

We then talked of England, whereupon ſhe aſked me to take her with me as a ſervant. This abrupt ſpeech might aſtoniſh ſome perſons; but not thoſe who have travelled much. I dare ſay the ſame requeſt has often been made to you, Milverton.

Milverton. Oh, yes. They fancy this is an earthly paradiſe for getting money bounded by a continual fog.

Elleſmere. She then queſtioned me much as to the diſtance of England from where we were. And as I ſaw ſhe was in a deſperate mood, and might attempt ſome deſperate adventure, I took care to explain to her the dif-

tance and the difficulties of the journey. Beſides which, I contrived, putting the ſevereſt preſſure on my ſtock of German, to convey to her that London was rather an extenſive town, containing two millions of people, and that it was not exactly the place for an unfriended young girl to be wandering about.

"The ſame thing everywhere, everywhere," ſhe exclaimed, in a tone of mournful reproach which I felt was levelled at our unchivalrous ſex in general.

I felt intereſted to underſtand her ſtory, and beginning to queſtion her in detail again, aſcertained ſo far, that ſhe was or had been a ſervant, that ſhe had been accuſtomed to take charge of children, having had eleven under her charge, that the wages were moſt wretched, which they certainly were, but ſtill it was not that or any of the ordinary kind of grievances which was now diſtreſſing her. Whenever we came to the jiſt of the diſcourſe, ſhe became more emphatic and I more ſtupid. At laſt I bethought me that if ſhe were to write out what ſhe had to ſay, I could then underſtand it well enough. This was a bright idea and one which I was able to convey to her. She was to bring me

the writing on the enſuing morning in the great ſquare. And having come to this agreement we parted, I taking care, with lawyer-like caution, to tell her that I did not know whether I could be of any uſe to her, with other diſcouraging expreſſions.

The next morning, duly fortified with my pocket dictionary, I ſat myſelf down to read her ſtatement. Ah, how clearly the whole ſcene is before me. It was on a broad bench, cloſe to a hackney-coach ſtand, within ſight of the palace. She looked over me and read aloud; and when I could not make out a word, we pauſed, and the dictionary was put in requiſition. The neareſt hackney coachman lying back on his box threw now and then an amuſed glance at the proceeding. Her's was a ſimple touching ſtory, touchingly told. I now know every word, every letter of it; but then it was very hard for me to comprehend.

It began by giving her birth, parentage and education. She was born of poor parents in the country a few miles out of the town. She was now an orphan. She had come into ſervice in the town. Her maſter had endeavoured to ſeduce her; but ſhe had ſucceeded in giving

ſome notion of her miſerable poſition to a middle-aged man, a friend of her family, who had taken an intereſt in her, and promiſed to receive her into his ſervice. Then ſhe gave warning to her miſtreſs who could not imagine the cauſe, and was diſpleaſed at her leaving. She could not tell her miſtreſs for fear of vexing her.

The character given by the miſtreſs (which I ſaw) went well with this ſtatement, as it was the praiſe of a perſon diſpleaſed.

The new maſter that was to be, had told her where to go to (the lodgings where ſhe was now ſtaying) and ordered her to get decent clothes, before coming into his ſervice. He did not live in that town. She left her place accordingly, provided herſelf with the neceſſary things, and awaited his orders. Meanwhile his plans were changed. He had juſt married, was probably about to travel, and wrote that he could not take her in. I am not ſure that there was any deliberate wrong-doing or treachery on his part—merely a wicked careleſſneſs, forgetting what a thing it is for a poor girl to be out of place, and not knowing that ſhe had taken the ſtep, perhaps, at the time he wrote. She had written again, and had received no

anſwer. She was left in debt and in the utmoſt diſtreſs.

This is the ſubſtance of what I eventually got out by croſs-examination. She had been out into the ſuburbs in ſearch of a place when I met her yeſterday. The woman with the child, who was no relation, had reiterated to me there that ſhe was a good girl and in great diſtreſs.

The uſual wicked eaſy way of getting out of her difficulties had been preſſed upon her—*Ich mag das Geld nicht auf eine ſchlechte Art bekommen, ſonſt würde ich es in kurzer Zeit haben;* but ſhe truſted that "the dear God would never permit this, ſo ſhe put her truſt in him." *Ich hoffe aber, der liebe Gott wird das nicht zugeben, denn ich verlaſſe mich auf Ihn.*

I remember that, occaſionally, while we were ſpelling over what ſhe had written, her large beautiful hand (do not ſmile, Milverton, a hand may be moſt beautiful and yet large) reſted on the page. There was a deep ſcar upon it, the mark of a burn, that told of ſome houſehold miſhap. I have ſeen many beautiful hands before and after, but none ſo beautiful to me.

At laſt we got through the writing and pauſed. "This is a bad buſineſs," I exclaimed;

and then I fell into a reverie, not upon her particular caſe ſo much, as upon the miſery that there is in the world. At laſt I looked up and felt quite remorſeful at the wiſtful agoniſed expreſſion of the girl whom I had been keeping in ſuſpenſe all this time, while indulging my own thoughts. She evidently thought (you know the extremely careleſs ill-dreſſed figure I generally am) that to aſſiſt her was quite out of my power. And ſo it was at the moment, for I had not the requiſite ſilver about me. Indeed why ſhould the rich carry any money about with them, when they have always the poor to borrow it from. However I had ſome ſilver in my pocket and gave her that, promiſing to bring the reſt. Her ecſtaſy was unbounded: of courſe ſhe began to cry (no woman is above that) though ſeeing my exceſſive diſlike to that proceeding, ſhe did the beſt to ſuppreſs it, only indulging in an occaſional ſob. Her firſt idea was what ſhe could do for the money. She would work for any time. We had found out that writing was better than talking; and here are her very words (I always carry them about with me), "*Was ſoll ich Ihnen für einen Dienſt dafür thun?*" "What ſhall I do for you in the

way of any ſervice for this?" "Nothing," I replied, "but only to be a good girl."

One thing I have omitted to tell you: but I may as well tell it. It is no matter now. While we were reading over the letter, I happened to aſk her whether ſhe had a lover. I had hardly aſked the queſtion before I would have given anything to have been able to recall it, as we ſometimes do in Court when a queſtion is objected to. Her ſimple anſwer came cruſhing into my ears, "Yes, but a poor man and far away." She thought my object in aſking was to aſcertain whether there was any help to be got from any other quarter: this ſhe anſwered, ſo like her ſenſible ſelf, without any bridling-up or nonſenſe of any kind, a ſimple anſwer to a ſimple queſtion. But the words went down like a weight into my heart, which has never been quite lifted off again. In ſhort, Milverton, I loved.

What ſhould poſſeſs me to-day to tell you this wild ſtory I know not. I know you really care for nothing but great intereſts and great cauſes, as you call them. With intenſe mad love for any one human being you cannot ſym-

pathize. I always noted the ſame in you from your boyhood upwards. Talk to you of a body of men—of a claſs—of a million, for inſtance, of people ſuffering anything, and you are immediately intereſted. But for any one of us you care nothing. I ſee through you, and always have. But I like you. Do not anſwer me, you know it is true.

I did not anſwer him, though knowing what he ſaid to be moſt untrue, and yet to have juſt that daſh of plauſibility in it, which makes injuſtice ſo hard to unravel. He proceeded. I ſaw Gretchen (that was her name) more than once again, and had a great deal of talk with her, finding my firſt impreſſions amply verified; and I ſtill think her one of the beſt intellects, and moſt beautiful natures, I have ever ſeen. I had in my pocket a very learned letter from one of the German Profeſſors of law to whom I had delivered a letter of introduction on paſſing through his town, on ſome points of juriſprudence, referring to Savigny's work. The parts of this which had been unintelligible I made her conſtrue to me; ſome of it was quite independent of technicalities, but merely required hard thinking and clear explanation.

The girl with my help made it all out. But of courſe it was not of ſuch themes that ſhe liked to talk, for women love perſonal talk, and their care is to know, not what men think about, but what they feel. One ſpeech of hers dwells in my mind. "You muſt be very happy at home," ſhe ſaid. I thought of my mouldy chambers and the kind of life I lead, and replied with an irony I could not check, "very:" and ſo ſatiſfied her gentle queſtionings.

I did not delay my departure later than I had at firſt intended; for in theſe caſes when you have done any good, it is well to be ſure you do not ſpoil it in any way. She would not have any more money than a trifling ſum that was a little more than ſufficient to pay off the debts already due, and they amounted to the very ſame ſum ſhe had originally mentioned to me in the gardens. We parted. Before parting ſhe begged me to tell her my name: then timidly ſhe kiſſed my hand; and, burſting into tears, threw her hood over her face and hurried away a little diſtance. Afterwards I ſaw her turn to watch the departure of the huge diligence in which I had enſconced myſelf.

Milverton. And you never ſaw her any more.

Elleſmere. Once more. Not being a philoſopher or a philanthropiſt, I do not eaſily forget thoſe I once care for. I ſtudied how to protect her in every way. I maſtered the politics of that German town; and learnt all the intricacies of the little Court there. I aſcertained everything reſpecting our relations with it, and who amongſt our diplomatiſts was deſirous of the reſidence there, when there ſhould be a change. I buſied myſelf more in politics than I had done; and I believe I muſt own that my ſpeech on the —— intervention, which had its merits and coſt me great labour, was ſpoken for Gretchen. Of courſe I need hardly ſay that I ſpoke only what I moſt ſincerely thought; but I ſhould probably have let politics alone but for her ſake. At laſt there was an opportunity of a new appointment being made of a Miniſter to that German Court; and the man who wiſhed for it, and whoſe juſt claims I had aided as I beſt could, obtained it. His wife, Lady R., one of thoſe brilliant women of the world who are often more amiable than we give them credit for being, had long noticed the care with which I had cultivated her ſociety. She imagined it was for one of her beautiful daughters, and did

not look unkindly upon me. Before ſhe went to reſide at —— I undeceived her, telling her the whole truth, the beſt thing in ſuch a caſe, and binding her to ſecreſy. She promiſed to look out for Gretchen and to take her into her houſehold. I told Lady R. that Gretchen had a lover and ſaid, that if any thing could be done for him, without lifting him out of his rank, it ſhould be. Neither would I have Gretchen made anything different from what ſhe was. I could have given her money by handfuls, but that is not the way to ſerve people. At the ſame time I implored Lady R. to let me know immediately in caſe anything ſhould ever occur to break off the marriage.

Milverton. And you would have put in your ſuit and married this girl.

Elleſmere. There was but little chance, I fear; but you may be ſure no opportunity would have eſcaped me. As for the world, I am one of the few perſons who really care but little for it. The hiſſing of collected Europe, provided I knew the hiſſers could not touch me, would be a grateful ſound rather than the reverſe—that is, if heard at a reaſonable diſtance.

Well, but I told you I ſaw Gretchen once

more. Yes, once more. You may remember that ſome time ago I had a very ſevere illneſs: and was not able to attend the Courts on an occaſion when I was much wanted. This appeared in the newſpapers of the day, and ſo I conjecture, came to the knowledge of Gretchen, who in her quiet indefatigable way had learnt Engliſh and was a great ſtudent, as I afterwards heard, of Engliſh newſpapers. She had alſo contrived to learn more about my life than I choſe to tell her when I anſwered her queſtion about my being happy; and the poor girl had formed juſter notions of the joyouſneſs and comfort of a lawyer's chambers in London. She begged for leave of abſence to viſit a ſick friend: Lady R. conjectured I believe where ſhe was going, and conſented.

A few days afterwards there was a knock at my door (I was ſtill very ill and unable to leave my ſitting-room, but ſolacing life as beſt I could by the ſtudy of a great pedigree-caſe) when my Clerk with an anxious and aſhamed countenance, put his head in, made one of thoſe queer faces which he does when he thinks a great bore is wiſhing to ſee me and that I had better ſay "no," and exclaimed "a young

woman from Germany, Sir, wants to ſee you." I knew, inſtinctively, who it was, but had the preſence of mind to make a geſture ſignifying I would not ſee her, (for I could not have ſpoken) and I was afraid in my preſent ſtate of weakneſs I ſhould betray myſelf in ſome way, if I were to ſee her unprepared. While the parleying was going on in the paſſage, I collected myſelf ſufficiently to ring for my clerk and tell him, he might appoint the young woman to come in the afternoon. By that time I had reflected upon my part and was ſomewhat of myſelf again. She came: I ſcolded and proteſted, ſhe did nothing in reply, but look at me and ſay how thin I was; and there was no reſiſting the quiet, affectionate, diſcreet way in which ſhe inſtalled herſelf every day for ſome hours as head nurſe. Even my old laundreſs relaxed ſo far as to ſay that Gradgin (for that was what ſhe called her) was a good girl and not hoity-toity: and my clerk Peter, a very cantankerous fellow, was heard to remark, that for his part, he did not like young women much, but Miſs Gradgin was better than moſt, and certainly his maſter did ſomehow eat more of anything made by her than by anybody elſe,

and never threatened now to throw the chicken-broth he brought in at his head.

I jeſt at theſe things, Milverton: and in truth what remains for us often in this world but to jeſt? Which of the Queens was it, by the way, who on the ſcaffold played with the ſharpneſs of the axe, and ſaid ſomething droll about her little neck. Well, I jeſt, but this viſit of Gretchen's was a very ſevere trial to me. It is a common trial though, I dare ſay. No doubt many a perſon dotes upon or adores ſome one elſe, who is, happily, as unconſcious of the doting or adoration as Ram Daſs, or any other heathen deity, of the fanatic love of his worſhippers. To the loving perſon, however, it is like walking over hot iron with no prieſt-anointed feet, and yet with unmoved countenance, not even allowed to look ſtoical. I could not reſiſt liſtening ſometimes to Gretchen's wife, innocent, pleaſant talk about all the new things ſhe was ſeeing; and perhaps if I had not kept carefully before me the claims of the abſent peaſant lover, ſome day when ſhe was moving about me like ſun-light in the room, I might, in ſome moment of frenzy, which I ſhould never have forgiven myſelf, have thrown

myſelf at her feet and aſked her to take theſe dingy chambers and my faded ſelf and all my belongings under her permanent control. But wiſer, ſterner, juſter thoughts prevailed.

I got better, and it was time for Gretchen to be thinking of going. Of courſe no foreigner can leave London without ſeeing the Thames Tunnel; and I obſerved that the moroſe Peter, though in general very contemptuous of ſight-ſeeing and ſight-ſeers, was wonderfully ready to eſcort Gretchen to ſee the Tunnel, which I thought a great triumph on her part. I ſpared myſelf the anguiſh of parting with her: a caſe came on rather unexpectedly in a diſtant part of the country and I was ſent for "ſpecial," as we ſay. Kings and tetrarchs might have quarrelled for what I care; I would not have meddled in their feuds to loſe one hour of Gretchen's ſweet companionſhip, if I might have had it heartily and fairly; but, as things were, I thought this a famous opportunity for making my eſcape without a parting. And ſo I ſtarted ſuddenly for the North, bidding Gretchen adieu by letter, expreſſing all my gratitude for her attention, and being able to rule and correct my expreſſions as it ſeemed good to

me. Before I returned ſhe had left, taking leave of me in a fond kind letter in which ſhe blamed me much for being ſo regardleſs of my health, and added a few words about my evident anxiety to get rid of her, which ſounded to me like ſome wild ſtrain of irony. Ever ſince, my chambers have ſeemed to me very different from what they were before: I would not quit them for a Palace—One or two new articles of furniture were bought by Gretchen who effected a kind of quiet revolution in my duſky abode. Theſe are my houſehold Gods.

One of her alterations I muſt tell you. You know my love for light and warmth; like that of an Aſiatic long exiled in a Northern country, whoſe calenture is not of green fields but of ſufficient heat and light once more to bathe in. Well, Gretchen ſoon found out my likings; and this was one of her plans to gratify me and make me well. My principal room has a window to the South-Weſt, a bay-window or rather a window in a bayed receſs. After aſcertaining as well as ſhe could from Peter, what were the limits throughout the year of the ſun's appearance on the walls of this receſs, on a ſudden one morning, Gretchen came in with a work-

man and two antique looking glaſſes of the proper ſize, which (a preſent of her own, and taxing her reſources highly) ſhe fixed one on each ſide of the receſs, from whence they have ever ſince thrown a reflected light into the room, which makes it feel at times uncomfortable like an ill-dreſſed perſon in great company. It is a trifling thing to mention to you, but very characteriſtic of her.

I have ſaid nothing to you, Milverton, which can deſcribe herſelf; and, indeed, I always look upon all deſcriptions of women, in books and elſewhere, as having ſomething mean, poor, and ſenſuous about them. I may tell you that ſhe always, from the firſt time I ſaw her, reminded me a little of the buſt of Cicero. She had the ſame delicate critical look, though ſhe was what you would call a great large girl. She might have been a daughter of his, if he had married, what he would have called, a barbarian German woman. In nature, ſhe has often recalled to me Jeannie Deans, only that ſhe has more tenderneſs. She would have ſpoken falſely (I am ſorry to ſay) for Effie; and would have died of it.

Lady R. when ſhe was over here ſome little time ago, ſaid to me, to comfort me, I ſuppoſe,

that though Gretchen was a ſweet girl, ſhe did not quite ſee what there was in her to make her ſo attractive to a man like me. But theſe women do not always exactly underſtand one another, or appreciate what makes them dear to particular men. She added, "but ſtill I do not know how it was, Gretchen became the great authority in our houſehold: they all referred to her about everything, and ſhe did a good deal of their work." In fact, ſhe was the perſonification of common ſenſe; only that what we mean by common ſenſe is apt to be hard, overwiſe, and diſagreeable: hers was the common ſenſe of a romantic perſon and of one who had great perception of the humorous. I think I hear her low, long-continued, dimpling laugh as I uſed to put forth ſome of my odd theories about men and things, to hear what ſhe would ſay. And ſhe generally did ſay ſomething fully to the purpoſe. But action was her forte. There was a noiſeleſs, ſoft activity about her like that of light.

Milverton. You ſpeak of her as if ſhe were dead. Is it ſo?

Elleſmere. No: much the ſame thing—married. There was an opportunity for advanc-

ing her lover. It was done, not without my knowledge. She had by this time ſaved ſome money. They were married ſix months ago. I ſent the wedding gown. Do not let us talk any more about it. I tell it you to ſhow you how deeply I care about your ſubject; for ſometimes I think with terror, as I go along the ſtreets, that but for my providential interference, Gretchen might have been like one of thoſe tawdry girls who paſs by me. Yes, ſhe might. I obſerved that ſhe had a pure horror of debt: and I do not know that circumſtances might not have been too ſtrong for her virtue. For by nature virtuous, if ever woman was, ſhe was.

Ellesmere was ſilent for a few minutes. Then he ſaid, let us have no more of this talk to-day, or, indeed, at any time, unleſs I ſhould begin the ſubject. One of the greateſt drawbacks upon making any confidence is that, as regards that topic, you have then loſt the royal privilege of beginning the diſcourſe about it yourſelf; and another can begin to ſpeak to you, or to think, (and you know that he is thinking) about the matter, when you do not wiſh it to be ſo much as thought of by any one.

He then began to ſpeak about ſome chemical experiments which he wanted me to try; and from that went on to talk about infuſoria, wiſhing me to undertake ſome microſcopical inveſtigations to confirm, or diſprove, a certain theory of his; adding by way of inducement, "theſe lower forms and orders of life ought, you know, to be very intereſting to people in the country, who themſelves in compariſon with us, the inhabitants of towns, can only by courteſy and for want of more preciſe and accurate language, be ſaid to live. In fact, their exiſtence is entirely molluſcous." Thus, in his uſual jeering way, he concluded a walk which left me with matter for meditation for many a ſolitary ramble over the downs which we then traverſed on our way homewards.

CHAPTER VIII.

IT is not often in the courſe of our lives, eſpecially after we have paſſed our nonage, that we can reckon upon being thoroughly undiſturbed and free to think of what we like for a given time. It is one of the advantages of travelling in a carriage alone, that it affords an admirable opportunity for thinking. The trees, the houſes, the farm-yards, the woods flit by, and form a ſort of ſilent chorus from the outward world. There is a ſenſe of power in overcoming diſtance at no expenſe of muſcular exertion of one's own, which is not without an elevating and inſpiriting influence upon the thoughts. The firſt thing, however, is, that we are pretty nearly ſure of being undiſturbed. The noiſe around us is a meaſured one, and is accounted for; it does not, therefore, fret the

moſt nervous perſon. Dr. Johnſon thought that travelling in a poſt-chaiſe with a pretty woman was one of the higheſt delights in life. Very ungallantly I venture to ſuggeſt that the pretty woman had better be omitted. She will talk ſometimes, and break the whole charm, thus preventing you even from thinking about her.

Having ſuch notions of the high merits appertaining to the inſide of a poſt-chaiſe in motion; in fact, conſidering it a place which, for the reſearch of truth, may be put in competition with the groves of Academus; it was with ſome pleaſure that I found myſelf alone in the carriage which had conveyed Elleſmere to the neighbouring railway ſtation on his return to town. It was the firſt time ſince our walk to the downs that I had had to myſelf, and been able to think over all that he had then told me. He was right in ſaying that his ſtory bore cloſe reference to the ſubject I have been conſidering. That ſuch a man ſhould find ſo much to attach himſelf to in this poor German girl, who might ſo eaſily have been found in a very different ſituation, makes one think with diſmay how ſome of the ſweeteſt and higheſt natures

amongſt women may be in the ranks of thoſe who are abandoned to the rude addreſs of the coarſeſt and vileſt of men. I ſay "ſome of the ſweeteſt and higheſt natures," for there is a cultivation in women quite independent of literary culture, rank, and other advantages. They are more on a level with each other than men. I do not reckon this as a proof of their excellence; nor do I at all indulge in the fancy that there is ſomething ſo peculiarly charming in uncultivated people. On the contrary they are ſeldom juſt, ſeldom tolerant; and, as regards innocence and child-like nature, theſe merits abound in perſons the moſt cultivated, and even the moſt converſant with the world. I have no doubt we all appear ſimple and unſophiſticated enough to ſuperior beings. It is not, therefore, that I mean to laud the innocence and naïveté of ignorance: but only to point out that there is a certain platform, as it were, of grace and unſelfiſhneſs, of tact, delicacy and teachableneſs, on which I have no doubt an immenſe number of women are placed, which makes any corruption of ſuch high capabilities the more to be regretted.

Dunsford, in his "Friends in Council," has failed in repreſenting Elleſmere, if he has not ſhown him to be a moſt accompliſhed man and a thorough gentleman, not exactly the conventional gentleman, but a man whom ſavages would certainly take to be a chief in his own country, ſhowing high courteſy to others with a ſort of coolneſs as regards himſelf, the reſult of being free from many of the uſual ſmall ſhames, petty ends, trivial vanities, and maſked ſocial operations which dwarf men in their intercourſe with others, or make them like clowns daubed over in ugly patches. His purſuits, as may have been ſeen, are on a larger ſphere than that of moſt lawyers. Very obſervant, too, of the world, I have ſcarcely a doubt he was right in his high appreciation of that girl's character.

We ſometimes think we have no romance left; but with all our borrowed ways of thinking, our fooliſh imitative habits, our eſtimations groſſer than thoſe of Portia's diſappointed ſuitors, ſome of us occaſionally do ſtill look at things and people as they are. And that alone produces romance enough.

I wonder whether Gretchen had any love for him! Alas, I ſuſpect, from a fond wiſtful

way in which I once ſaw Lucy look at him, that there is an Engliſh girl who would mightily like to occupy Gretchen's place in his heart. But he caſts not a thought at her: ſuch is the perverſity of things.

But I muſt turn from thinking about Elleſmere to the conſideration of my ſubject, which is favoured by this quiet moment and this retired ſpot. It ſeems to me that the beſt thing I can do will be, not ſo much to ſeek for new arguments and new views, as to ſtrengthen and enlighten thoſe already put forward in a preceding chapter.

I ſpoke, for inſtance, there of the cauſe that poverty was of this ſin. Now women do not equally partake with men in the general poverty in a land, but they have to endure an undue proportion of it, by reaſon of many employments being cloſed to them, ſo that the ſex which is leaſt able and leaſt fitted to ſeek for employment by going from home, finds the means of employment at home moſt circumſcribed.

I cannot but think that this is a miſmanagement which has proceeded, like many others, from a wrong appreciation of women's powers.

If they were told that they could do many more things than they do, they would do them. As at preſent educated, they are, for the moſt part, thoroughly deficient in method. But this ſurely might be remedied by training. To take a very humble and ſimple inſtance. Why is it that a man-cook is always better than a woman-cook? Simply becauſe a man is more methodical in his arrangements, and relies more upon his weights and meaſures. An eminent phyſician told me, that he thought that women were abſolutely deficient in the appreciation of time. But this I hold to be merely one inſtance of their general want of accuracy, for which there are eaſy remedies, that is, eaſy if begun early enough. Now it does ſeem perfectly ludicrous that in the diſpenſing of women's gear they ſhould need the intervention of men. I dare ſay there is ſome good reaſon for the preſent practice, ſome advantage gained; but I ſhould think it likely that this advantage would be far more than counterbalanced by the advantage of employing women altogether in theſe tranſactions.

Again, in the proceſſes of the arts, and in many ways which I have not time or ſpace to

enter upon, women might be provided with new ſources of employment, if they were properly trained.

But the truth is, there is a great want of ingenuity and arrangement throughout the world in not providing employment for its unemployed, both men and women. Things that imperatively want to be done, ſtare you in the face at every corner.

If we conſider the nature of the intellect of women, we really can ſee no reaſon for the reſtrictions laid upon them in the choice of employments. They poſſeſs talents of all kinds. Government to be ſure is a thing not fit for them, their fond prejudices coming often in the way of juſtice. Direction alſo they would want, not having the ſame power, I think, of imagination that men have, nor the ſame method, as I obſerved before. But how well women might work under direction. In how many ways where tact and order alone are required, they might be employed: and alſo in how many higher ways where talent is required.

I ſuppoſe I ſhall have to ſay ſomething about unhappy marriages as a cauſe of the evil I have

named as the great ſin of great cities. Of courſe there are a great many unhappy marriages. A weighty moral writer of the preſent day intimates that there is no medium in the felicity, or infelicity, of marriage, that it is either the ſummit of joy or the depth of torment. I venture to differ from him in this reſpect. On the contrary, it ſeems to me probable that in marriage the whole diapaſon of joy and ſorrow is ſounded, from perfect congeniality, if there be ſuch a thing, (which I doubt) to the uttermoſt extent of irritable uncongeniality.

How this may be I know not, but though unhappineſs in marriage may form ſome juſtification of, or at leaſt ſome explanation for, other connections more or leſs permanent, yet I contend no want of domeſtic love or peace can juſtify the particular ſin which is the ſubject of our preſent theme.

At the ſame time I am far from pronouncing that the law of divorce may not require conſiderable modification; but really there are ſo many large queſtions to deal with in reference to this preſent ſubject, that I feel I cannot preſume to enter upon this one of divorce, to diſcuſs which properly would require any one man's life. I

cannot, however, omit all allusion to it, as it has undoubted reference to the subject in hand; and I may remark that it is a great deal easier to pass by Milton, or to sneer at him, for his great work on "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce," than to answer the arguments therein contained. The truth is, that there is scarcely any where a mind sufficiently free from the overruling influence of authority on these and similar subjects to be able clearly and boldly to apprehend the question for itself.

However it does not become us to pronounce, if we are to judge from the results only, that our present notions of marriage are the best possible. I can imagine a native of some country where polygamy is practised, contending that the state of things in his own country in this respect is preferable to that in ours, not, perhaps, as producing less misery, but at any rate less dishonour both to men and women. We should find it difficult to gainsay him in this, as of course he would make much of the immense and obvious evils of the sin we have been considering.

The greatest and most dangerous objection, I

ſhould rather ſay aſſertion, which will be made againſt anything that has been ſaid in this chapter and the two preceding ones, is one that will be uttered with a deriſive ſmile by men of the world, as they are called, that is of a very ſmall ſection of it. Thinking they are deeply cognizant of the human heart, becauſe they are very much afraid of its aberrations, and that they are fully aware of the powers of the imagination, from having little themſelves and diſcouraging the little they ever had—lapped, perhaps, in a kind of proſperity which ſingularly blinds thoſe who have the misfortune to enjoy an uninterrupted career of it—bounded by a ſmall circle of equally well-conditioned, ſelf-ſatisfied individuals—men of this kind pronounce not only upon the influx and efflux of tea, coffee, ſugar and gold, (in which by the way their dicta are generally wrong) but they are alſo able ſpecifically to declare about the ebb and flow of the paſſions or the affections; about the tendereſt and the moſt delicate of the relations in human life. Talk to any man of this worldly claſs about moral cauſes, or religious influences, he is equally at home with them, as if you were to aſk him about the ſub-

jects moſt "immerſed in matter." I can ſee the ſelf-ſufficient way in which if he had lived ſome ſeven hundred years ago, after the firſt cruſade, he would have pronounced with a wave of his hand after dinner, that there never could be ſuch another adventure again, as the firſt had by no means been found to pay. But ſoon all Europe is liſtening to the clink of hammers upon harneſs, and thouſands, hundreds of thouſands, are repeating an adventure not good in a commercial ſenſe, but ſtill which gave a dignity to them ſuch as the ſtayers at home never attained.

Having damaged, as much as I can, the imaginary opponents who I know, however, will prove real ones, before I bring their ſaying into preſence, I will now tell what that ſaying will aſſuredly be.

In anſwer to all that has been urged in the way of remedy for this evil, they will ſimply reply "but theſe things always muſt be, the laws of ſupply and demand hold good in this caſe as in others; to think otherwiſe is the mere dream of writers and other ideologiſts: no wonder Napoleon diſliked ſuch people, we do too."

To this, taking them on their own ground, I would reply that at any rate the force of circumſtances (a phraſe they delight in) may be ſo adapted and modified as only to meet the exact neceſſities of the caſe. I mean, for inſtance, that thoſe by nature moſt inclined to innocence ſhould have the faireſt opportunities of remaining innocent, that in ſhort it ſhould be the worſt people that fell into the worſt ways. This of courſe is only an ideal ſcheme too, but there might, however, be a practical tendency in that direction.

In reality, however, it is the greateſt miſtake to ſuppoſe that ſuch laws of ſupply and demand are not overruled by much higher influences. All things depend for their ultimate aim and end on the ſpirit in which they are undertaken, which ſpirit cannot well be concealed. The meaſured generoſity of mean people, whoſe gifts are all ſtrictly related to duty, does not deceive others; the byſtander knows that theſe people are not generous, though he cannot exactly confute them from their words or their deeds. Again, people may pretend to be religious, but if the real ſpirit is not in them, its abſence is ſoon felt. I am merely giving theſe as inſtances of the deficiency of the right ſpirit being felt, or

perceived, even when the outward deeds or words are there. But the ſpirit which reſults from conviction, and which gradually modifies public opinion, is one of the moſt powerful things known: who ſhall put limits to it? It will meet and occaſionally maſter all the paſſions. Take the queſtion of duelling, for inſtance; if you could have told a man of former times, when duelling was rife, that it would ſoon be almoſt done away with, "What!" he would have exclaimed, "will there be no lovers, "no jealous huſbands, no walls to take the inner "ſide of, no rudeneſs, no drunkenneſs, no ca-"lumny, no ſlander? And, if there are, how "will the quarrels that muſt ariſe from theſe "things be adjuſted? Do not talk ſuch Uto-"pian nonſenſe to me, but come and let us "practiſe in the ſhooting gallery." And, yet, ſee how ſtealthily, how unaſſumingly, how completely, public opinion, the reſult of a wiſe and good ſpirit gradually infuſed into men, has diſarmed duelliſm, as quietly, in fact, as the king's guard in former days would have taken away the weapons of any two preſumptuous gentlemen who brought their quarrelling too near his Majeſty's vicinity in his parks.

One of the kind of reproaches that will ever be made with much, or little, juſtice, (generally with little juſtice) againſt any men who endeavour to reform or improve anything, is that they are not ready with definite propoſitions, that they are like the Chorus in a Greek play, making general remarks about nature and human affairs, without ſuggeſting any clear and decided courſe to be taken. Sometimes this reproach is juſt, but very often, on the other hand, it is utterly unreaſonable. Frequently the courſe to be taken in each individual inſtance is one that it would be almoſt impoſſible to decide, ſtill more to lay down with minuteneſs, without a knowledge of the facts in the particular inſtance; whereas what is wanted is not to ſuggeſt a courſe of action, but a habit of thought which will modify not one or two actions only, but all actions that come within the ſcope of that thought.

Again, there are people who are not ſo unreaſonable as to expect ſuggeſtions that will exactly meet their own individual caſes, but ſtill they wiſh for general rules or general propoſitions to be laid down. There muſt be inſtant

legiſlation to pleaſe them, ſomething viſibly done. And often it is needful that ſomething ſhould be done, which however falls, perhaps, under the functions of other men than the original ſocial reformers. There is always ſuch a belief in what is mechanical, that men of ordinary minds cannot aſſure themſelves that anything is done, unleſs ſomething palpable is before them, unleſs they can refer to a legiſlative act, or unleſs there is a building, an inſtitution, a newſpaper, or ſome viſible thing, which illuſtrates the principle. But in reality the firſt thing is to get people to be of the ſame mind as regards ſocial evils. When once they are of this mind, the evils will ſoon diſappear. A wiſe conviction is like light; it gradually dawns upon a few minds, but a ſlight miſt riſes alſo with this riſe of light; as the day goes on and the light riſes higher, ſpreads further, and is more intenſe, growth of all kinds takes place ſilently and without great demonſtration of any kind. This light permeates, colours, and enlarges all it ſhines upon.

Now, to apply ſome of theſe thoughts to our preſent ſubject. I do not believe that there will always be a certain ſet amount of wrong-

doing in this or in any other caſe. On the other hand, I do not expect that people will ſuddenly ruſh into virtue. To take a very humble inſtance, the ſuppreſſion of ſmoke, one of the moſt viſible evils in the world, how long a time it takes to ſubdue that. From Count Rumford's time to the preſent day, how many perſons have written, preached, talked, experimented, on the ſubject. And if this long proceſs has to take place in ſo obvious a matter, how much more muſt it be ſo in the ſubtler regions of men's minds, in their habits of juſtice, or of forethought. But, inſenſibly, even in theſe dim and remote regions, good counſels, or evil counſels, will eventually prevail—as quietly, perhaps, but as ſurely, as the ſubmerged coral rock grows and increaſes from the accumulations of minute, gelatinous, molluſcous creatures.

The train of thought which I have deſcribed above, did not of courſe occur to me in the methodical way in which I have now put it down, but with frequent breaks and interruptions both from internal thoughts and the aſpect of external objects. Now it was the noiſe of the mill, now the beauty of ſome homeſtead,

now the neatneſs of ſome well-cultivated field, or the richneſs of ſome full farm-yard that claimed my attention. But when I had finiſhed thinking of the anſwer that muſt be given to that worldly objection "that there is a demand for wickedneſs and that there muſt be a ſupply of it," I leaned back in the carriage and turned my mind to other branches of the ſubject. Juſt at that time, whether it was that a troop of little children came out of a ſchool-houſe cloſe to the road, or that I noticed the early budding in the hedge-rows, as I paſſed along, I began to think of what had been alluded to in a former chapter, namely, what a beautiful thing youth is, and how ſad that it ſhould be ſpoilt at its outſet. And I went on to think not only of the negative, that is, of the loſs of ſo much beautiful life and promiſe, but of the poſitive miſery inflicted, which ſurely is well worth taking into conſideration.

Tragedy is very grand, with grand acceſſories,

> "Preſenting Thebes', or Pelops' line,
> Or the tale of Troy divine."

when a purple-clad man, free from all the pettineſſes of life, pours out a ſtrain of ſorrow

which melts all hearts, and goes ſome way to dignify the ſufferings of all humanity. But, after all, in ſome ſqualid den, as great if not a greater tragedy is often tranſacted, only without the ſcenery and decorations of the other, when ſome poor victim of ſeduction, now ſteeped in miſery and ſunk in the abyſſes of ſelf-degradation, amidſt blaſphemy, ſubject to reviling that ſhe ſcarcely hears or eaſily endures from habit, lies on the bed of ſickneſs thinking of her mother's gentle aſſiduities in ſome of the ailments of her childhood, and covers her face with her hands at the thought that that mother, dead, perhaps heart-broken, may now, a ſpirit, be looking down upon her. Well might Camoens wonder "That in ſo ſmall a theatre "as that of one poor bed, it ſhould pleaſe "Fortune to repreſent ſuch great calamities. "And I too," he ſays, "as if theſe calamities "did not ſuffice, muſt needs put myſelf on their "ſide; for to attempt to reſiſt ſuch evils would "be ſomething ſhameleſs."

I had meditated but a few minutes on this cry of anguiſh, which I ſeemed to hear as it came from the dying bed of one of the moſt

unfortunate of men of genius, and which I fancied, too, I heard from many other death-beds, when we turned out of the main road into the lanes which lead to Worth-Aſhton. With all our pretences at governing or directing our thoughts, how they lie at the mercy of the mereſt accident! Once in theſe lanes I quitted my ſubject, and began to think how the way to my houſe might be ſhortened, and I was already deep in the engineering difficulties of the proceeding, when, ſomewhat ſatirically I ſaid to myſelf, what a mania you have for improving everything about you: could you not, my dear Leonard, ſpare a little of this reforming energy for yourſelf? One would think that you did not need it at all to ſee the way you go on writing moral eſſays. Myſelf replied to me, this is a very ſpiteful remark of yours, and very like what Elleſmere would have ſaid. Have I not always proteſted in the ſtrongeſt manner againſt the aſſumption, that a writer of moral eſſays muſt be a moral man himſelf? Your friend Elleſmere, in reference to this very point, remarks that if all clergymen had been Chriſtians, there would by this time have been no ſcience of theology. But, jeſting apart, it would be a ſad thing indeed if one's

ideal was never to go beyond one's own infirmities. However, myſelf agrees with you, my dear I, ſo far, that it is much ſafer to be thought worſe than better than one really is: and ſo blacken me as much as you like and detract from me as much as you can, ſo that you do not injure my arguments or my perſuaſions. Theſe I believe in, and will endeavour to carry out, juſt as if they had been uttered by the moſt irreproachable and perfect man in the world.

Maintaining this ſtrange dialogue as ſtoutly as if there had been two perſons inſtead of one in the carriage, I, or rather we, (I wonder whether the editorial "we" is thus really dual, conſiſting of a man and his conſcience) we, I ſay, reached the gate of Worth-Aſhton, pretty good friends with each other, and pleaſed with what we had thought over during our ride homewards.

CHAPTER IX.

SINCE giving an account of my laſt reverie, I have been abroad for a ſhort time, which has a little interrupted my work, but I now reſume it with leſs feeling of wearineſs. I ſeldom think much during a tour. Indeed I come out to avoid thinking. I do not come to ſee what can be ſaid or thought about any place, but to ſee it. Nevertheleſs, occaſionally, I make a few notes conſiſting of ſome disjointed words, ſufficient to recall to me, and to me only, what were the things which made impreſſion upon me.

One ſcene of this laſt journey I find commemorated in this ſhort way; and, as it is connected with ſome thoughts which carry on the ſubjects we (my readers and I) have lately been conſidering, I will recall it.

I ſhall not tell with any preciſeneſs where I was: for if I did ſo, and did it well, my countrymen would flock to ſee the place. Not that I grudge them ſeeing anything. I ſuppoſe it happens to many of us, when abroad, to feel a little aſhamed now and then of theſe ſame countrymen; but yet I often think with pleaſure that even the moſt coarſe and obtuſe traveller brings back ſomething beſides ſelf-conceit. One regrets that ſuch opportunities are not always beſtowed on minds fully able to profit by them; but ſtill one hopes that the moſt uncultivated people cannot eſcape getting ſome little advantage from their travels; and if they were to ſtay at home, they would not the leſs remain uncultivated people.

Such travellers, however, would not thank me at all for deſcribing a place which might thus get into the guide-books, and then, alas! form one more ſpot which they muſt ſtop to look at, while they would far rather ſcamper over more ground and ſee more well-known places with great names. And as for the people who ſee things for themſelves, they will not paſs by the ſpot in queſtion without giving it a due regard.

And what a ſcene it is! Acroſs a wide extent of water lies a bridge of immenſe length formed of uneven planks ſupported upon piles. There is no railing to the bridge, ſo that you ſeem almoſt upon the water, and you have the ſenſation of being at ſea, with the grandeur and without the miſery, as it is to me, of ſuch a ſituation. Here and there is an oratory outjutting from the line of planks, with a narrow edging of ſtone round it.

It was evening when I came upon the bridge, but not ſo late as to prevent me from ſeeing well the country about me which at intervals went down into the water in narrow tongues of land, with buildings upon them. Immediately on the heights above me were an old tower and a monaſtery. Near the land ſome giant reeds roſe up from the water, but did not ſway to and fro the leaſt, for there was not a breath of wind. The only noiſe was a plaſh of the water againſt a jetty and the occaſional jumping of a fiſh. On one of the ſtrange looking rocks there, which come abruptly out of the water as if aſking you a queſtion from the deep, repoſed a meditative crane ſtanding upon one leg.

On one ſide of the bridge the hills riſe up around you evenly and the mountains are well balanced in form: on the other ſide, they deſcend abruptly and aſcend again, leaving a moſt picturesque gorge. Two poplars were to be ſeen on the lowland near this gorge.

As evening deepened, and no more peaſants returning homeward from the other ſide, ſaluted me with their Good night, the houſes on the ſurrounding hills ſhowed like glow-worms, and all was ſtill, ſave the plaſh of the water on the jetty.

I find that new places do not always bring new thoughts: ſometimes they only intenſify thoſe which one has thought before. My mind went back to what is held by many perſons to be a moſt proſaic ſubject — namely, education. And I thought how education, to be of any aſſured worth, muſt continue throughout life. "Now, Sir, that your education is ended," exclaims the parent or the guardian, to many a young man whoſe education, in the higheſt ſenſe of the word, is now about to begin. This is the miſtake that we make, too, about the poor. Reading and writing will not do alone. You might as well prepare for a liberal hoſpitality by a good apparatus for roaſting and boiling, but

never putting on any viands, ſo that the kitchen machinery went on grinding unceaſingly, with no contentment to the appetites of the hungry. No: before we ſhall be able to make much of education, the higheſt amongſt us muſt take larger views of it, and not ſuppoſe that it is a mere definite quantity of cultivation—defined according to the narrow limits of the faſhions of the day.

If we ſaw this clearly, we ſhould not be ſo anxious to ſucceed at college, at the bar, in parliament, in literature, or in any one art and ſcience. We ſhould perceive that there was a certain greatneſs of nature and acquirement to be aimed at, which we would not ſacrifice to any one purſuit, worldly or artiſtic.

I ſtayed no longer on the bridge, but, aſcending from it, made my way to a church which ſtood on the height cloſe to the old tower. I marked in the light of the moon the ſlight, graceful, fantaſtic croſſes in iron-work, telling, that a peaceful population ſlept beſide me; and I ſat down upon a low, broad ſtone wall. Thence you might ſee the wide waters and ſome houſes whoſe ſhadows lay upon the meads which ſkirted the waters.

"And that is what all their ambition has come to," I muttered to myſelf, turning to the croſſes,

Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens

(what an epithet!)

Uxor; neque harum, quas colis, arborum,
Te, præter inviſas cupreſſus,
Ulla brevem dominum ſequetur.

Theſe inevitable common-place remarks moſtly contain the profoundeſt and the ſincereſt thought. Yes, life may be but a poor buſineſs at the beſt, nevertheleſs, ſaid I to myſelf, I will try to do ſomething yet, if life is ſpared to me. And ſo, reſuming the ſubject which I had been working at before I left home, (namely, the great ſin of great cities) I began to conſider what I ſhould conclude by ſaying, juſt as if I had been in my ſtudy at Worth-Aſhton.

My eye wandered over the dark hills catching every now and then the glow-worm light which came from ſome houſe or cottage perched up there. I pictured to myſelf the daughter of one of theſe homes carried off to ſome great town, ſoon to be loſt there in its ſqualid ſuburbs, like beautiful, ſpoilt fruit ſwept away with garbage

into the common kennel. The girl, perhaps, is much to blame herſelf, for we muſt admit that the fault is not always on one ſide, and we muſt not ſuffer any ſickly ſentiment to darken truth and juſtice. Yes—ſhe may be much to blame; but, ſurely, the wiſer creature, man, is more ſo. Seduction is ſuch a poor tranſaction. There was a time, it was one of the baſeſt times the world has ever ſeen, when ſeduction was thought a fine and clever thing; but now who does not ſee that to delude a woman, a creature eaſily to be deluded, eſpecially through its affections, is a ſlight, unworthy tranſaction, and but for its dire conſequences, would be ludicrous, like cheating a child at cards? But when you add to this that in many a caſe, deſertion follows ſo rapidly upon ſeduction as almoſt to appear as if they had been planned together, then the ſmallneſs of the tranſaction is abſolutely loſt in the conſideration of its baſeneſs.

However, ſay what we will, there will often be ſeductions; and it would be a great point gained, if deſertion ſhould be looked upon with greater ſeverity. This brings me at once to the ſubject of what are called illegitimate children.

Now, duties are very often very difficult things to apprehend rightly. As everything is ultimately referred to duty, and as a great many things in this world are very dubious, it is manifeſt that duties are often very dubious likewiſe. There are not only clear, but dim and ſhadowy duties, if I may ſo expreſs them, which are very perplexing, and occupy much of a man's time and thought. Often we find that what we ſuppoſed to be a duty was anything but a duty. The great perſecutors for opinion have probably found that out now; and, indeed, on earth, we often diſcover, that what we ſuppoſed to be a duty and performed with earneſt diligence, was a great deluſion. Under theſe circumſtances, it does ſeem to me that when we have before us an undoubted duty, one of thoſe things which come under the axioms of morality, we can hardly lay too much ſtreſs on the performance of that. It is like what we ought to do in our charities, I think. Charity is ſo difficult and perplexed a thing, that when a man has got hold of a clearly good charity which he can carry out, he had better do that thoroughly than diſſipate his reſources, mental and phyſical, in any efforts of a dubious tendency.

Now, I ſuppoſe, there are few things clearer to the human mind,

" to ſaint, to ſavage and to ſage "

than that a father owes duties to his child. The dulleſt ſavages have ſeen that. Even Lacedæmonians, if they put off individual fatherhood, only did ſo by throwing it upon the community. How can a man, for a moment, imagine, that any difference of rank (a mere earthly arrangement) between the mother of his child and himſelf can abſolve him from paternal duties. I am loſt in aſtoniſhment at the notion. And then imagine a man, performing all manner of minor duties, neglecting this firſt one the while. I always fancy that we may be ſurrounded by ſpiritual powers. Now, think what a horrible mockery it muſt ſeem to them, when they behold a man going to charity dinners, buſying himſelf about flannel for the poor, jabbering about education at public meetings, immerſed in indifferent forms and ceremonies of religion, or raging againſt ſuch things, becauſe it is his duty, as he tells you; and at the door holding a link, or perhaps at that moment bringing home the produce of ſmall thefts in a

neighbouring, narrow alley, is his own child, a pinched-up, haggard, outcaſt, cunning-looking little thing. Throw down, man, the flannel and the ſoap and the education and the Popery and the Proteſtantiſm; and go up that narrow alley and tend your child: do not heap that palpably unjuſt burden on the back of a world which has enough at all times of its own to bear. If you cannot find your own child, adopt two others in its place, and let your care for them be a ſort of ſin-offering. Theſe are indignant words, but not more ſo than is right, I do believe, and I will not ſuppreſs one of them.

I am not ignorant of the difficulty of doing as I would have a man do in ſuch a caſe. I do not write as a hermit or a clergyman, but as a man who thinks he knows ſomething of the world. To own to immorality, to have that fair reſpectability ſpotted which we all value ſo much, and which is valuable, is no ſlight effort. A man who would beard a lion in his den, will ſhrink from doing what he ought to do, leſt in ſo doing his neighbours ſhould ſay unpleaſant words about him behind his back. And yet there have been reſpectable men who have worn beards and ſtrange hats which their neigh-

bours did not wear, a more daring thing, perhaps, than owning to any immorality and endeavouring to repair it.

There are men who have ſecretly ſupported the burden of an illegitimate family: theſe at leaſt are far better men than thoſe who have joined the world in ignoring the exiſtence of thoſe they were bound to know of and to ſuccour. Great kings who can afford to ſet aſide conventionality, before whom "nice cuſtom curtſeys," have boldly taken charge of their illegitimate children, and the world has not thought the worſe of them for that, whatever it may juſtly have thought of the reſt of their proceedings.

Some may reply all this acknowledgment is encouragement. I ſay not. I ſay it holds before a perſon thoſe duties, the general forgetfulneſs of which encourages to immorality. But, really, fine queſtions of general morality ought to be of ſecond-rate importance to a man who is neglecting his firſt duties.

Is it not ſo, I ſaid, looking round upon the thin ſhadows caſt by the croſſes over the graves. Silent population, (any one of whom, the meaneſt, could now tell us more, mayhap, than all the wiſe men and doctors of this earth) ſilent

population, is it not ſo? But none anſwered, unleſs a ſigh of the breeze which now ſtole over the church-yard was the expreſſion of one of thoſe ſubtle chords of ſympathy, rarely heard, ſtill more rarely appreciated, which, perhaps, bring animate, and what we call inanimate nature into ſecret, ſtrange communion.

I went down again upon the bridge, looked up at the ſolemn ſky, for the moon was clouded now, and beneath me at the dim waters, being able to diſcern naught elſe: and ſtill with ſome regard to what I had been thinking of in the church-yard, hoped that, in a future ſtate at leaſt, we might have ſome opportunity of loving and making our peace with thoſe whom we have wronged here, and of ſeeing that our wrong, overruled by infinite goodneſs, has not wrought all the injury which there was in it to do.

So I walked on, having thoſe dim apprehenſions and undefined feelings which are yet, perhaps, the unfaſhioned ſubſtance of our ſincereſt and moſt exact afterthought, until darkneſs and the cold and the thought of to-morrow's journey drove me homeward—the home ſo emblematical for man in his pilgrimage—the home of an inn.

CHAPTER X.

SO varied, extenſive and pervading are human diſtreſſes, ſorrows, ſhort-comings, miſeries and miſ-adventures, that a chapter of aid or conſolation never comes amiſs, I think. There is a pitileſs, pelting rain this morning; heavily againſt my ſtudy windows drives the ſouth-weſtern gale; and altogether it is a very fit day for working at ſuch a chapter. The indoor comforts which enable one to reſiſt with compoſure, nay even to welcome, this outward conflict and hubbub, are like the plans and reſources provided by philoſophy and religion, to meet the various calamities driven againſt the ſoul in its paſſage through this ſtormy world. The books which ſurround me have been found an equal reſource in both reſpects, both againſt the weather from without and from

within, againſt phyſical and mental ſtorms: and, if it might be ſo, I would paſs on to others the comfort which a ſeaſonable word has often brought to me.

If I were to look round theſe ſhelves, what a hoſt of well-loved names would riſe up, as thoſe who have ſaid brave or wiſe words to comfort and aid their brethren in adverſity. It ſeems as if little remained to be ſaid; but in truth there is always waſte land in the human heart to be tilled.

The firſt thing which occurs to me, is, that in bearing misfortune and vexation, as in overcoming temptation, there is a certain confidence which had better be put aſide. This confidence ſometimes reſults from a faith in reaſon, or rather a faith in our being exactly amenable to reaſon. For inſtance, it is ſometime before a man ceaſes to have a full belief in his own powers of accompliſhing by direct means the abſolute rule in his mind. If he is convinced of a thing, he ſays to himſelf, of courſe he will act accordingly. It aſtoniſhes him to hear of men — great men — who could not overcome, or found the greateſt difficulty in overcoming, ſome ſmall habit. Indeed,

according to his brave imaginings, he intends always to overcome terrors and temptations, not merely to avoid them. Such is a very juvenile though a very natural mode of thinking. It requires a good many fallings in the mire, before a man finds that his own mind, temperament and faculties, are things which will give him as much or more trouble to manage, than his affairs, or his family, or, than the whole world beſides.

But as a man learns certain rules of health, ſo that it is ſaid that at forty he is either a fool or a phyſician, ſo again, in dealing with the affections of the mind, there comes a ſkill which is not to be deſpiſed: and a man finds that the evil he cannot maſter he can ignore, the care he cannot efface he can elude, the felicity he cannot accompliſh, he can weigh and underſtand, and ſo reduce it from the ſize it would occupy in his imagination to its proper and reaſonable limits. At laſt even ſenſitive people learn to ſuffer leſs from ſenſitiveneſs; not that it grows dull by age, but that they learn to manage it better.

As a ſound preparation for conſolation of various kinds, I would begin, not by wilfully

magnifying evils, but by ſhowing their true proportions, which no doubt makes them ſeem larger than the imagination of the young, miſtaught by many unſound fictions, pictures them to be. But nothing can be better than the truth. In its hand are all earthly and all heavenly conſolations. As an inſtance of what I mean, there is a common fancy that an untoward event generally comes and goes, with conſiderable rapidity — and there an end; whereas it is very often a long-continued proceſs. You do not fall ſheer down a precipice, but go tumbling by degrees, drinking in the full meaſure of danger and horror, catching at buſhes here and there, now imagining for a moment that you have found ſecurity on ſome projecting ledge; and then finding the ground crumbling under you: and ſo you fall onwards till you reach the loweſt level. The above is rather a ſtrong image, but it may convey what I intend.

To illuſtrate it in practice—moſt men who have lived any time in the world, unleſs they have been the very minions of fortune, in which caſe, by the way, they are not much to be envied, have vexations of conſiderable ſtanding—long lawſuits, diſaſtrous adventures, an

ill-conducted child, or ſome other terrible relative, a deplorable ſhame, often ſuch a mingled tiſſue of fault and misfortune, that they cannot pity themſelves ſufficiently for blame at their folly; and they return from thinking over the folly to grieving over the ill-luck (as they call it) which brought out the folly ſo remarkably on that particular occaſion.

Such a courſe of things requiring time for its developement, can hardly fail to exerciſe in vexation all the moods and faculties of a man. A ſtateſman does not perhaps work, intellectually ſpeaking, harder than a lawyer in great practice; but the cares of the latter are cares which begin and end with the day; not long lines of policy which require time and protracted care on one ſubject to work out, and where failure often comes by ſlow degrees.

Now, then, for the attempt at aid or conſolation in ſuch a caſe. Suppoſe the courſe of events I have ſpoken of to be one of failure and vexation—realized, or about to be ſo, to uſe an American phraſe, and a very good one. A wiſe man (but that word "wiſe" is hardly a fit adjective to put before "man") it would be better to ſay, a man well-read in the heart, ſees when he has ſuffered enough from theſe length-

ened trains of evil, when he has exhauſted the inſtruction from them; and, though, from time to time he may revert to them, as new views or new circumſtances occur, enabling him to look down from a freſh height, as it were, on theſe long, dreary, diſaſtrous paſſages of his life, yet he reſolves ſubſtantially to have done with them; and, when he finds them invading his mind and memory, adroitly he contrives at once to occupy it with ſomething elſe.

With his wiſdom of this world, Napoleon, no doubt, took care not to let his Ruſſian campaign preſs fatally upon his recollections.

Another way for a man in ſuch a caſe is to quote theſe diſaſters fearleſſly to himſelf, and ſometimes to others, as dear-bought bits of experience, now poſſeſſions: bought, it is true, at a moſt extravagant price, but ſtill a little property, far better than nothing.

There is great humility in ſuch plans as the above: the man who adopts them has found out, or at leaſt he thoroughly ſuſpects, his own weakneſs, and is willing to avail himſelf of any fair advantage to fight with the numerous enemies that ſurround him. Like a wiſe commander, he looks about for the ſlighteſt riſing ground.

The ſame adroitneſs and practical wiſdom may be manifeſted, not only in thought but in action. A friend of mine who had to attend a ſeries of interviews, in which buſineſs was diſcuſſed of much vexation to him, and where he had to undergo, unjuſtly, much contumely, diſcovered that the occaſions when he gave way to temper and behaved unwiſely, were thoſe in which he rode on a tireſome horſe to the place of buſineſs. This is very natural: his nerves were a little ruffled in managing the unruly quadruped; his powers a little impaired; his compoſure ſlightly broken through to begin with: and, where things are nicely balanced, this ſlight diſturbance of equanimity might turn the ſcale. Afterwards, he took care to go to the place of theſe interviews always in the eaſieſt manner, and noted the good effect of this change. How trivial ſuch an anecdote will ſeem, except to thoſe who know the world well, and have ſeen how important ſmall things may be when they happen to be brought into the ſame narrow compaſs of affairs with great ones.

But, now to paſs to other ſubjects of human diſtreſs, and firſt among them, to all that is ſuffered from obloquy.

In bearing obloquy, it may be noted by way of conſolation, that the world is always correcting its opinions; that, except amongſt your particular friends and relations, who have, perhaps, taken up a moſt erroneous view of your character; and, in the pride of a little knowledge, will never let it go; the general body of opinion is very fluent, and, at laſt, everything has a hearing. I have a private ſuſpicion of my own, that ſome of thoſe Roman Emperors we read of, have been maligned a little. Somebody elſe perhaps has the ſame notion; if it is a juſt one, it will yet be inveſtigated, and what there is true in it be ſifted out.

It is certainly a long time to wait, for ages, to have an unjuſt opinion of you corrected; but if fame is worth anything at all, then there is a conſolation in thinking that eventually you have a chance of being fairly dealt with.

By way of comfort in bearing calumny, it may be obſerved that calumny does not originate in the way ordinarily ſuppoſed; that there is rarely any ſuch thing as a ſyſtem of active, well-regulated, well-aimed calumny, ariſing out of malice prepenſe; but that far more often it has its ſource in honeſt ignorance, mean-

mindedneſs, or abſolute miſtake. It is to be viewed, therefore, in the light of a misfortune rather than in that of a perſecution.

Any man of many tranſactions can hardly expect to go through life without being ſubject to one or two very ſevere calumnies. Amongſt theſe many tranſactions, ſome few will be with very ill-conditioned people, with very ignorant people, or perhaps with monomaniacs (and much leſs account is taken of them than ought to be) and he cannot expect, therefore, but that ſome narrative of a calumnious kind will have its origin in one of theſe tranſactions. It may then be fanned by any accidental breeze of malice or ill-fortune, and become a very ſerious element of miſchief to him: ſuch a thing is to be looked upon as pure misfortune coming in the ordinary courſe of events. The way of treating it, is to deal with it as calmly and philoſophically as with any other misfortune. As ſome one has ſaid, the mud will rub off when it is dry and not before. The drying will not always come in the calumniated man's time, unleſs in favourable ſeaſons, which he cannot command. It is not wiſe, however, to be very impatient to juſtify one's ſelf; and, altogether,

too much ſtreſs ſhould not be laid upon calumny by the calumniated, elſe their ſerious work will be for ever interrupted; and they ſhould remember that it is not ſo much their buſineſs to explain to others all they do, as to be ſure that it will bear explanation and ſatisfy themſelves.

When I was in the habit of ſeeing ſomething of official life, I uſed to wonder that a great department ſuffered itſelf to be calumniated, and made no ſign; but older and wiſer heads than mine ſoon convinced me that their buſineſs did not admit of their confuting every idle and erroneous ſtatement that was made about them, and that they were mainly to anſwer to thoſe who had authority to queſtion them. The ſame judicious maxim applies alſo to private life.

Not far removed from calumny, and often leading up to it, is injurious comment on people's conduct, which when addreſſed or repeated to them, or imagined by them, is apt to vex them ſorely. But really if it were conſidered how utterly incompetent men are to talk of the conduct of others, as they do, the talkers would often be ſilenced at once, and the

ſufferers as readily conſoled. In the firſt place how imperfect is our knowledge of our neighbour's circumſtances. You ſuppoſe a man rich, and he is poor; or rich, but with perils, claims, and reſponſibilities of which you know nothing; you ſuppoſe him healthy, and he is tortured by ſome internal diſeaſe; you ſuppoſe him unhappy in his domeſtic relations, and he is moſt felicitous; or, on the other hand, you ſuppoſe him lapped in the loving regards of his family, and all the while he has a wretched, contentious home; you ſuppoſe him a man of leiſure, and he is cumbered with cares, duties, labours and endeavours, of which you have not the ſlighteſt conception—what is your comment on this man's conduct worth? Then if we obſerve the difference of men's natures, and conſider the want of imagination in moſt men which confines them to the juſt appreciation of thoſe natures only which are like their own, how much this complicates the queſtion. Probably the difference of temperament amongſt men is as great as that amongſt the different ſpecies of animals—as between that, for inſtance, of the lively ſquirrel and the ſolemn crane. Now, if only from this difference between them, the

ſquirrel would be a bad judge of the felicity, or generoſity, or the domeſtic conduct, of the crane.

Probably when we are thinking or talking of a perſon, we recall ſome viſual image of that perſon. I have thought what an inſtructive thing it would be, if under ſome magic influence, like that, for example, which would conſtruct a "palace of truth," it were arranged that as we gave out our comments on the character or conduct of any perſon, this image on the retina of memory ſhould change according to the truth, or rather the want of it, in our remarks. Gradually, feature after feature would ſteal away till we gazed at nonentity, or we ſhould find another image glide into the field of view, ſomebody we had never ſeen perhaps, but to whom the comments we were uttering, really did apply.

Now, the ſufferers from injurious and unjuſt comment might treat the whole thing as one which lacked reality. The blame itſelf is often good enough, well-compacted, forcible, having an appearance of juſtice—but withal no foundation in real circumſtances, ſo that it is only good, if you may ſay ſo, in a literary ſenſe, as good fiction, but having no ground-work in

real life. How little ought a thoughtful man to be long vexed at ſuch ſtuff, immaterial in every ſenſe.

Beſides, none of the great teachers have taught us, that to be reviled is any ſignal miſfortune; and there has been one, the greateſt, who has pronounced it to be fraught with bleſſing.

In bearing neglect, the next evil to calumny, and a ſort of diſengaged ſhadow of it, many aids may be given to thoſe who will be content to take them. No doubt neglect is hard to bear for one who feels that he ought not to be neglected. But where this is juſtly felt, the neglect may generally be traced up to ſome ſource which is not, neceſſarily, a painful one. A man will not condeſcend to uſe certain means, and yet would have what thoſe means alone, or beſt, can give him; or he inſiſts, in his mental cogitations, upon poſſeſſing that which could hardly be got except with the aid of certain advantages joined to merit, which advantages, whether wiſely or not, Nature or Fortune has denied him. Having one ſtout friend (as Bacon, before quoted, has noticed) what will it not do for a man?

There are certain things he cannot ſay for himſelf. If he ſays them, they turn into ſhame, vain-glory, and miſchief, inſtead of aid and honour to him. Well, he has no friend to back him at the right time, how can he get thoſe advantages which ſuch a friend could gracefully obtain for him? Frequently, perhaps moſt frequently, the friend in queſtion comes forward in the ſhape of a relation who has a direct intereſt in the fortunes of the man he puts forward. This is called having good connexions. Any neglected man of merit ought not to ſuffer himſelf to be quite diſheartened becauſe he was not born with ſuch relations. Neither were the poor men who dig in the fields.

But neglect is only one phaſe of what man hates more, and ſuffers more from, than almoſt anything elſe—namely, injuſtice. His ſenſitiveneſs in this reſpect is very remarkable. A little wrong outweighs a great injury. Indeed, the things are not to be weighed in the ſame ſcales, are practically incommenſurable. The ſea invades a man's eſtate, and retires carrying away land and crops, leaving ſand where there was

alluvial ſoil: it is a misfortune; and he has a dull ſenſe of ſorrow and vexation if the loſs is one of magnitude. But the poor blind elements meant no harm, or if he thinks they were guided, he knows it was by one whoſe chaſtiſements muſt be bleſſings.

Again, ſuppoſe him to have ſpent much money in riotous living. Well, he thinks of this with ſhame, eſpecially when ſome good comes in his way to do, and he ſees what he might have done with the ſquandered reſources. Still there was ſomething for his money. He was not cheated; he was miſtaken.

But obſerve the ſame man on looking over a bill of coſts: where, often, for many items together, it is only wrong-doing requiring to be paid, and he feels that when he pays it, he is helping to ſupport a vicious ſyſtem of things. It is not well to be of his family circle on the day when he ſettles thoſe accounts, unleſs he is one of thoſe rare and generous creatures who do not mitigate their own misfortunes by unkindneſs to thoſe with whom they live. No liberality of nature will ſuffice to ſoothe his mind. It is not a queſtion of liberality. The ſame man who, with Luther, would ſay to his

wife, Why did we not give the ſilver cup to that poor man as we had no money, will haggle over an unjuſt or unſatisfactory payment from morning till night. But it is a queſtion of wiſdom and experience: for a wiſe and well-informed man will ſee what muſt almoſt inevitably be the evil reſults of the particular form of laws he lives under (for codes are the doing of very imperfect creatures with a limited range of circumſtances before them) and he does not expect to go into the moſt vexed and troublous part of human affairs, and come out with ſmooth countenance and unruffled garments. Neither will ſuch a man be diſpoſed to imagine that he is worſe off than others, or has worſe people to deal with.

And, the ſame thing is to be ſaid of injuſtice generally. You often hear a man making the ſomewhat ſimple complaint, that he only wants juſtice. Only juſtice! why juſtice requires time, inſight and goodneſs: and you demand this in each caſe of the many hundreds that occur to you in the courſe of a year in which your fellow beings have ſome dealings with you. No—juſtice! look not for it till you are in a ſtate of being for which you will

hardly ſay that you are yet quite fit. In truth, the conſideration of what a world of miſunderſtanding, haſte, blindneſs, paſſion, indolence and private intereſt we are in the thick of (perhaps the beauty of it as a world of trial) would go ſome little way to cure a man from vexing the depths of his ſoul, becauſe he ſuffers from extortion, miſrepreſentation, neglect, or injuſtice of any kind. He is on earth: and men are unjuſt to him. How ludicrous the complaint!

Perhaps the wrongs we endure from unjuſt treatment would be eaſier to bear, if our notions of juſtice were modified a little. For my part, inſtead of picturing her, ſword in hand, apparently engaged in blindly weighing out ſmall groceries, a figure that would better denote the goddeſs Fortune as it ſeems to me, I imagine Juſtice travelling ſwiftly round about the earth, diffuſing a mild effluence of light like that of a polar night, but followed not by her own attendants, but by the ungainly ſhadows of all evil things, envy and prejudice, indolence and ſelfiſhneſs, her enemies; and theſe ſhadows lay themſelves down before her in their malice, and love to intercept her light. The aſpect of a good man

ſcares them partially away, and then her light lies in great broad ſpaces on the mead: with moſt of us, it is chequered like the ſunſhine under trees; and there are poor creatures in whoſe preſence all the evil ſhadows deſcend, leaving but a ſtreak of light here and a ſpot there, where the hideous ſhadows do not quite fit in together. Happily, however, all theſe ſhadows are mortal, and as they die away, dark miſerable places come into light and life again, and truth returns to them as her abodes for ever.

Deſcending from theſe flights about juſtice to the more proſaic parts of the ſubject, I may notice, that mean misfortunes are often the moſt difficult to bear. There is no inſtrument of philoſophy ſmall enough to take them up and deal with them. A long career of ſmall anxieties is alſo very hard to bear.

One thing which often maintains theſe vexations in full force, is the ſhame of owning to our want of wiſdom in the firſt inſtance. A man, playing in imagination his part in life, always, like the ſtory books, makes his hero ſucceſsful in the end: and, therefore, in real life,

he is immenſely diſturbed and humiliated at finding that ſuch is the devilry of circumſtances, that if he only gives a little inlet to miſchance by folly or incautiouſneſs of any kind, he is ſometimes invaded by a flood of evil.

He bears this in ſecret, ſtruggling with all his might and eating his own heart, as it were, rather than own to the folly he committed at firſt. Nothing leſs will ſatisfy him than to retrieve the whole misfortune, and cancel by ſucceſs his firſt error. Thus we come to one more inſtance of the truth, that Pride applies the ſcourge more frequently and with far heavier hand than Penitence; with the hand, in fact, of another.

As regards the "career of ſmall anxieties," which I ſpoke of above, one great art of managing with them, is to ceaſe thinking about them juſt at that point where thought becomes morbid. It will not do to ſay that ſuch anxieties may not demand ſome thought, and, occaſionally, much thought. But there comes a time when thought is waſted upon theſe anxieties; when you find yourſelf in your thoughts, going over the ſame ground again and again to no

purpoſe, deepening annoyance inſtead of enlarging inſight and providing remedy. Then the thing would be to be able to ſpeak to theſe fretting little cares, like Lord Burleigh to his gown of ſtate, when he took it off for the night, "Lie there, Lord Treaſurer."

It muſt be remembered though that his cares, aſſured as he was of his miſtreſs's favour, were for the moſt part mere buſineſs cares, and did not exactly correſpond with the ſmall anxieties which I was ſpeaking of. Theſe are very hard, I ſuſpect, to diſmiſs. Perhaps the beſt way of getting rid of them is not to attempt too much at once, but at leaſt to change the cares, ſo as not to let one ſet prey upon the mind and make it become morbid—juſt as Newton, unable to go abruptly from his high, abſorbing thoughts to what moſt men would conſider recreation, merely adopted a change of ſtudy, and found his relief therein.

There is often a very keen annoyance ſuffered by ſenſitive and high-minded people, ariſing from diſſatisfaction with their own work. I ſhould be very ſorry to ſay anything that would ſeem like encouragement to ſlight or unconſcientious working, but to the anxious,

truth-ſeeking, high-minded, faſtidious man, I would ſometimes venture to ſay, "my good friend, if we could work out our ideal, we ſhould be angels. There is eternity to do it in. But now come down from your pedeſtal, and do not overfret yourſelf, becauſe your hand, or your mind, or your ſoul, will not fulfil all that you would have it. There have been men before you, and probably will come others after you, whoſe deeds, however much approved by the general voice, ſeemed, or will ſeem, to the men themſelves little better than a caricature of their aſpirations."

How much, by the way, accompliſhments of various kinds would come in to help men to get rid of over-riding ſmall cares and petty anxieties. Theſe accompliſhments moſtly appeal to another world of thought and feeling than that in which the little troubles were bred. The ſtudious, the buſy and the ſorrowful might find in art a change of thought which nothing elſe, at leaſt of worldly things, could give them. And the accompliſhments I mean would be of uſe on occaſions when there is no need, and where it is ſcarcely fitting, to ſummon forth the ſolemn aid of religion or philoſo-

phy. Not that I would have ſuch aid far diſtant from any mind, or on any occaſion: for there is a comfort and a ſobriety of mind to be gained from the great topics of conſolation which nothing elſe can ſurely give.

In conſidering various forms of unhappineſs, which has been the buſineſs of this chapter, for the purpoſe of providing ſome ſmall aids and conſolations, one form has occurred to me which is not uncommon, I imagine.

It is where an almoſt infinite regret enters the mind at ſome happineſs having been miſſed which in imagination ſeems the one, poſſible, preſent good to the perſon indulging the imagination: and the men or women in this ſad caſe go on all their days mourning or fretting for want of that imagined felicity. This muſt often occur in the midſt of great ſeeming proſperity which deepens the vexation, and gives an air of eſpecial mockery to it.

To find conſolation for this ſtate of mind may not be eaſy; ſtill there are medicaments even for it. Imagine the happineſs in queſtion gained, fond dreamer; do you not already ſee ſome diminution of the happineſs itſelf—it will

only be from lack of imagination if you do not —but at any rate do you not at leaſt perceive how many fears ſuch happineſs would throw you open to? "Ah, Davy," ſaid Johnſon to Garrick, after going over his new houſe and looking at the fine things there, "theſe are the things that make a deathbed terrible."

Every felicity, indeed, as well as wife and children, is a hoſtage to Fortune.

Laſtly, there is to be ſaid of all ſuffering that it is experience. I have forgotten in whoſe life it is to be found, but there is ſome man who went out of his way to provide himſelf with every form of human miſery which he could get at. I do not, myſelf, ſee any occaſion for any man's going out of the way to provide misfortune for himſelf. Like an eminent phyſician he might ſtay at home, and find almoſt every form of human miſery knocking at his door. But ſtill I underſtand what this chivalrous enquirer meant, who ſought to taſte all ſuffering for the ſake of the experience it would give him.

There is this admirable common-place, too, which, from long habit of being introduced in

ſuch diſcourſes, wiſhes to come in before I conclude; namely, that infelicities of various kinds belong to the ſtate here below. Who are we that we ſhould not take our ſhare? See the ſlight amount of perſonal happineſs requiſite to go on with. In noiſome dungeons, ſubject to ſtudied tortures, in abject and ſhifty poverty, after conſummate ſhame, upon tremendous change of fortune, in the profoundeſt deſolation of mind and ſoul, in forced companionſhip with all that is unlovely and uncongenial, men, perſevering nobly, live on and live through it all. The mind, like water, as deſcribed in that beautiful paſſage in Metaſtaſio which I will tranſcribe below, paſſes through all ſtates, till it ſhall be united to what it is ever ſeeking. The very lonelineſs of man here is the greateſt proof, to my mind, of a God.

" L'onda dal mar diviſa
Bagna la valle e'l monte;
Va paſſeggiera
In fiume,
Va prigioniera
In fonte,
Mormora ſempre e geme,
Fin che non torna al mar;
Al mar dov' ella nacque,

Dove acquiſtò gli umori,
Dove da' lunghi errori
Spera di ripoſar."

Such were my thoughts this wet day which I had made up my mind was to be a dreary day throughout, but I had hardly come to the end of what I had to ſay, when, may it be a good omen that the chapter itſelf may bring ſome cheer to ſome one in diſtreſs, the ſun peeped out, the drops of rain upon the leaves gliſtened in the ſunſhine like afflictions beautified by heavenly thoughts, and all nature invited me out to enjoy the gladneſs of her aſpect, more glad by contraſt with her former friendly gloom.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ſun came out brilliantly this morning. To be ſure, there was a chillineſs in the air; but if you walked about with vigour, and ſaid it was a charming morning, it gradually became ſo. An eccentric friend of mine, of the Johnſonian ſchool, maintains that all kinds of weather may be treated in a ſimilar manner, and ſays that if a man will go out in the rain without any defence and pretend to know nothing about the ſhowers, the rain will ceaſe for him, each drop exclaiming, "It is no uſe raining upon that man, he does not mind it." Whether my friend has a moral meaning to this fable of his, I do not know; and, indeed, it is difficult to ſound the depths of ſome men's humour, the deepeſt part of their nature.

As I walked up and down under the ſhelter of a wall, ſo that I might have the full benefit of the ſun's rays, I could not help thinking, that the ſun had been very little worſhipped by idolaters. In fact, he is too manifeſt a benefactor to be much idolized. Moreover, what the natural man likes to worſhip, is ſome ugly little idol, an incarnation of one or other of his own bad paſſions. I ſuppoſe the real explanation is, that the form of the ſun being a ſimple one, eſſentially belonging to the inanimate world, provoked no deſire to worſhip, and left no room for ſufficient myſtery. So, after all, it is perhaps a proof of the craving imagination of mankind that the ſun has had, comparatively ſpeaking, but few worſhippers, while an ungainly ſtone, or a thing with many hands and legs, has enjoyed the tendereſt adoration.

Then I thought if our ſenſes were finer, what an exquiſite ſight it would be, to behold all the inanimate world turning gently to the ſun each day, a fact which we only perceive in the reſults of ſuch fond looks for many years, as exhibited in the growth of trees: whereas, if our ſenſes were more delicately apprehenſive, we might ſee every leaf, bud and twig making

its little way towards the light, and all nature, like one ſunflower, bending ſlightly forwards in a ſupplicating attitude to the ſun.

Warming with the ſubject I exclaimed, this is quite an Italian ſky—rather home-made was the diſparaging ſecond thought. In ſuch a mood it was very natural to think of foreign travel. I looked at the fig-trees againſt the wall, and felt that they muſt be rather diſguſted at the climate which needed ſuch a poſition for them. However, ſaid I, it is only what the greateſt men have had to endure, to live in an uncongenial clime and to bring forth fruit with painful culture and under moſt adverſe circumſtances; ſo you muſt not complain, though you are nailed up againſt the wall. On went my mind to a particular fig-tree near Cordova, from thence down the Guadalquiver; when I ſaw again the beautiful birds come out of the ſandy banks of the river; and, in truth, I was in a full career of travel, when it occurred to me that I had often thought many things about travelling, and that it might be uſeful to put them together. So, walking up and down, like a peripatetic philoſopher, only with no diſciples, (which, by the way, is a ſafer thing for the diſcovery of

truth) I put into ſome order the following remarks on travel.

A journey has often been compared to a life. I ſuppoſe that in any compariſon ſo frequently uſed, there muſt be ſome aptitude; but it does not ſtrike me. Any one day is like a life, is indeed an epitome of it: morning, noon, evening, awaking and going to ſleep have all the cloſeſt analogy with the progreſs of a life. But a journey is often very diſſimilar to a life. In travelling, for inſtance, for pleaſure, you go out with much hope of delight: the delight is partly realized; but there is much that is untoward and which at the time prevents a thorough enjoyment and appreciation of what you do ſee. You return with joy, and the journey is afterwards ſtored up in the memory as a complete pleaſure, all the miſhaps being put into, what the Dutch call, "the forget book," or only remembered as intereſting incidents. Clearly, one of the main delights is in the recollection. Now we cannot venture to ſay whether that will be the caſe with the journey of life. There does not appear much promiſe of that.

I took a turn up and down the garden and

thought over that laſt ſuggeſtion which is a very ſerious one. Soon, however, I returned to the ſubject of travelling.

Yes, I ſaid to myſelf, certainly, there is great pleaſure in coming back after a tour (which, by the way, may be another great difference between theſe journeys and the journey of life) at leaſt I know I am always glad to come back to that great, ſilent, unexpectorating people to whom I belong, upon whoſe dominions the ſun never ſets, who are very powerful and ſomewhat dull, free as far as conſtitutions and forms of government go, but as ſlaviſh as any other nation to the great tyrants, cuſtom and public opinion; a people indeed who do not enjoy any exuberant felicity, but who have humour enough to ſee their faults and ſhortcomings, which is ſome alleviation.

But to deſcend more to particulars about travelling. The firſt thing is in the preparation for it, the mental preparation, I mean. In this preparation lies ſome of the greateſt utility and of the greateſt pleaſure connected with travelling. And without this preparation what a ſmall thing travel would be. What is it to ſee ſome tomb, when the name of the

inmate is merely a pompous ſound — the name of an unknown king, duke, or emperor—compared with what it is to ſee the tomb of one whoſe fortunes you have ſtudied, who is a favourite with you, who repreſents yourſelf or what you would be, whoſe very name makes your blood ſtir? The ſame thing of courſe applies in travel to knowledge of the arts, ſciences and manufactures. Knowledge is the beſt excitement and the trueſt reward for travel—at once the means and the end. A dignified and intelligent curioſity, how much it differs from mere, inane lion-hunting; where the ignorant traveller gapes at wonders which the guides know far more about than he does.

With regard to the mode of travelling, it is curious to compare the ancient with the modern; the free yet ſtately way of the former, the methodized yet undignified way of the latter. Imagine a traveller in former days ſetting off from the anceſtral manſion leiſurely, on horſeback. Within ten miles there might be an adventure; and throughout the journey, which had not been much cleared up by the accounts of former travellers, there muſt have

been a conſtant feeling of doubt as to what was to happen next, and a conſequent excitement a little like the feeling of a great diſcoverer in unknown lands ſeeking after the kingdom of Preſter John, the El Dorado, or the Fountain of perpetual youth; and not being certain any day that he might not come upon one of theſe wonders.

I think it is poſſible to combine, occaſionally, the advantages of modern and ancient travelling, eſpecially for the vigorous and healthy.

In the plans and modes of travelling, the queſtion of companionſhip comes firſt. And by the way, what a hint it might give many a young man of the difficulties to be conquered in domeſtic companionſhip, when he finds how hard it is to agree with his fellows in travel for a few ſhort weeks. All the difficulties attendant upon companionſhip occur in this caſe of travelling. Indeed, the firſt queſtion is, whether you ſhould journey alone, ſolitary and unmoleſted; or with one other, when the want of profound ſympathy and the wiſh to quarrel will be very painful; or with two or three, when the quarrelling can better break out and the companions ſeparate into factions. The advantages and diſadvantages are ſo nearly

equivalent, that the traveller will probably condemn and regret whichever courſe he takes, and therefore may take any one without much concern. To the very ſerious reader I may mention that the above deſcription is not given quite in earneſt, but it points to what are ſome of the prominent dangers of companionſhip. Really it is diſgraceful that men are ſo ill-taught and unprepared for ſocial life as they are, often turning their beſt energies, their acquiſitions and their ſpecial advantages into means of annoyance to thoſe with whom they live. Some day it will be found out, that to bring up a man with a genial nature, a good temper, and a happy form of mind, is a greater effort than to perfect him in much knowledge and many accompliſhments. Then we might have that tolerance of other people's purſuits, that abſence of diſputatiouſneſs, and that freedom from ſmall fuſſineſs, which would render a companion a certain gain. It will not be deſirable, however, to wait till that period before we begin our travels.

The advantages of travel are very various and very numerous. I have already put the knowledge to be gained as one of them. But

this is for the young and the unworn. A far greater advantage is in the repoſe of mind which travelling often gives, where nothing elſe could. It ſeems rather hard though, that all our boaſted philoſophy cannot do what a little change of place ſo eaſily effects. It is by no magical property, however, that travelling does this. It is merely that by this change things aſſume their right proportions. The night-mares of care and trouble ceaſe to weigh as if they were the only things of weight in the world.

I know one who finds ſomewhat of the ſame advantage in looking at the ſtars. He ſays, it ſuggeſts a welcome change of country. Indeed, he maintains that the aſpect of theſe glorious worlds might ſomewhat comfort a man even under remorſe.

Again, a man's own land is a ſerious place to him, or at leaſt has a poſſible ſerioufneſs about it, which is like a cloud that may at any moment come over the ſpot he is occupying.

There he has known the ſweetneſs and the bitterneſs of early loves, early friendſhips. There, mayhap, he has ſuffered one of thoſe vaſt bereavements which was like a tearing

away of a part of his own ſoul: when he thought each noiſe in the houſe, hearing noiſes that he never heard before, muſt be ſomething they were doing in the room—the room—where lay all that was mortal of ſome one inexpreſſibly dear to him; when he awoke morning after morning to ſtruggle with a grief which ſeemed as new, as appalling, and as large as on the firſt day; which, indeed, being part of himſelf and thus partaking of his renovated powers, roſe equipped with what reſt, or alacrity, ſleep had given him; and ſank, unconquered, only when he was too wearied in body and mind to attend to it, or to anything.

The places where he has felt ſuch ſorrows may be the deareſt in the world to him, may be ſure to win him back to them; but they cannot always be regarded in that eaſy, diſengaged way which is neceſſary for perfect recreation.

This, then, is one of the advantages of travel, that we come upon new ground, which we tread lightly, which is free from aſſociations that claim too deep and conſtant an intereſt from us; and, not reſting long in any one place, but travelling onwards, we maintain that deſirable lightneſs of mind: we are ſpectators, having

for the time no duties, no ties, no aſſociations, no reſponſibilities; nothing to do but to look on, and look fairly.

Another of the great advantages of travel lies in what you learn from your companions: not merely from thoſe you ſet out with, or ſo much from them, as from thoſe whom you are thrown together with on the journey. I reckon this advantage to be ſo great, that I ſhould be inclined to ſay, that you often get more from your companions in travel than from all you come to ſee.

People imagine they are not known, and that they ſhall never meet again with the ſame company (which is very likely ſo); they are free for the time from the trammels of their buſineſs, profeſſion, or calling; the marks of the harneſs begin to wear out; and altogether they talk more like men than ſlaves with their ſeveral functions hanging like collars round their necks. An ordinary man on travel will ſometimes talk like a great imaginative man at home, for ſuch are never utterly enſlaved by their functions.

Then the diverſities of character you meet with inſtruct and delight you. The variety

in language, dreſs, behaviour, religious ceremonies, mode of life, amuſements, arts, climate, government, lays hold of your attention and takes you out of the wheel-tracks of your every-day cares. He muſt, indeed, be either an angel of conſtancy and perſeverance, or a wonderfully obtuſe Caliban of a man, who, amidſt all this change, can maintain his private griefs or vexations exactly in the ſame place they held in his heart while he was packing for his journey.

The change of language is alone a great delight. You paſs along, living only with gentlemen and ſcholars, for you rarely detect what is vulgar, or inept, in the talk around you. Children's talk in another language is not childiſh to you; and, indeed, everything is literature, from the announcement at a railway ſtation to the advertiſements in a newſpaper. Read the bible in another tongue; and you will perhaps find a beauty in it you have not thoroughly appreciated for years before.

As regards the enjoyments of travel, I ſhould be ſorry to ſay anything pedantic about them. They muſt vary ſo much according to the nature

of the individual. In my view, they are to be found in the chance delights, rather than in the official part, of travelling. I go through a picture-gallery, enjoying with inſtructed and well-regulated ſatisfaction all the things I ought to enjoy. Down in the receſſes of my mind, not communicated perhaps to any of my companions, is a ſecret hope that the room I ſee in the diſtance is really the laſt in the building, and that I ſhall have to go through no more. It is a warm day, and, ſtepping out upon a balcony for a moment, I ſee a young girl carefully helping her infirm mother out of church and playfully inſiſting on carrying the market burdens of both, far too heavy for her little ſelf. I watch the pair to the corner of the ſtreet, and then turn back to ſee the pictures which muſt be ſeen. But the pictures will fade from my memory ſooner than this little ſcene which I ſaw from the balcony. I have put that by for my private gallery. Doubtleſs, we need not leave our own country to ſee much that is moſt beautiful in nature and in conduct; but we are often far too much engaged and too unobſervant, to ſee it.

Then there is the new climate. How ex-

quiſite the mere ſenſation of warmth is to many perſons! Then there is the ſtroll in the market-place, or the ſight of the harbour, or the proceſſion, or the guard-houſe—in ſhort, the aſpect of all thoſe ordinary, but, in a ſtrange country, unfamiliar things which, happily, no hand-book need dilate upon, or even point out, but which men are perverſe enough to like all the better for that.

The benefits which ariſe from making the inhabitants of different nations acquainted with one another may be conſiderable. How many things there are to be learnt on both ſides: and how ſlow men are in copying the good from each other. An evil cuſtom or a dubious one, or a diſeaſe, mental, moral, or phyſical, how rapidly it ſpreads over the earth! Evil is winged. How ſlowly any contrivance for cleanlineſs, or decorum, or good order, makes its way. If it were not that good by its nature is enduring, and evil by its nature tranſitory, there would be but little chance for the welfare of the world.

In contemplating different nations, the traveller learns that their differences are very great,

and yet how ſmall when compared with their reſemblances. That intenſity of diſlike which ariſes at theſe ſmall differences, and which even the moſt philoſophical minds are apt at times to feel, is a great proof of the tyrannous nature of the human heart, which would have every other creature cut out exactly after its own pattern.

One of the things to be moſt noted by an Engliſhman in travelling, is the remarkable difference, as it ſeems to me, between our own and other nations in the amuſements of the people. We are the people who have ſent out our efforts to the uttermoſt parts of the Earth, and yet a great deal of our own life at home is very barren and uncultivated. When I have been watching the gameſomeneſs of other people, it has often ſaddened me to think of the poverty of reſources in my own country in that way. Shows alone will not do. Pictures are good in their way, but what is wanted is ſomething in which people themſelves are engaged. Indeed more perſons are amuſed, and rightly ſo, in playing at bowls than in looking at Raphaels, Murillos or Titians. Thoſe who are moſt amuſed, if one may uſe ſuch a word, in con-

templating theſe great works, are thoſe in whom the works produce a ſecret feeling of power to create the like—I do not ſay, like pictures or even like works of art, but ſomething great, if only great deſtruction — in fact, where the works elicit the ſympathy of kindred genius. But for the amuſements of the people, ſomething on a very broad and general baſis muſt be ſought for.

Returning, however, to the ſpecial ſubject of travelling, which I am now conſidering, it is worth notice that there is no occaſion for being exceſſively emulous, or haſte-bitten, in travelling any more than in other occupations of life. Let no truly obſervant man feel the leaſt envious, or diſconcerted, when he hears others talk familiarly of cities which are dream-land to him, the names of which are poetry in his mind. Many of theſe men never have ſeen, and never can ſee any thing, as he can ſee it. The wiſe do not hurry without good reaſon. A judicious traveller tells me that he once went to ſee one of the greateſt wonders of the world. He gazed and gazed, each minute ſaw more, and might have gone on ſeeing into the thing for weeks, he ſaid. Two regular touriſts walked

in, glanced about them, and almoſt before he could look round, they were gone. They will ſay, they ſaw what there was to be ſeen. Poor fellows! Other men might have inſtructed them: now they will have their own miſconceptions, ariſing from haſty impreſſions, to contend with.

I muſt ſay, though, that anything is better than inſincerity in the way of admiration. If we do not care about what we ſee, let us not pretend to do ſo. We do not come out to tell lies, but rather to get away from falſehood of all kinds.

There is alſo an obſervation to be made with reſpect to the enjoyment of the beauties of natural ſcenery, which applies not only to travelling, but is of very general application; namely, that we ſhould enjoy and make much of that which comes in our way on the everyday occaſions. While it may be well worth the while of the lover of nature to be curious in looking after rocks, rivers, mountains, and waterfalls, yet the obvious, everyday beauties of nature are not to be diſregarded. Perhaps the ſhort haſty gazes caſt up any day in the midſt of buſineſs in a denſe

city at the heavens, or at a bit of a tree ſeen amid buildings,—gazes which partake almoſt more of a ſigh than a look, have in them more of intenſe appreciation of the beauties of nature than all that has been felt by an equal number of ſight-ſeers, enjoying large opportunity of ſeeing, and all their time to themſelves. Like a prayer offered up in the midſt of everyday life, theſe ſhort, fond gazes at nature have ſomething inconceivably ſoothing and beautiful in them. There is a remark by an exquiſite obſerver and very ſubtle, often very profound, thinker, which indeed ſuggeſted the above thoughts, though we have each turned the thing a different way, he looking at a certain unreality in nature, and I conſidering the combination of the upturned look to nature with the ordinary, earthly life of man. "But this beauty of nature," he ſays, "which is ſeen "and felt as beauty, is the leaſt part. The "ſhows of the day, the dewy morning, the "rainbow, mountains, orchards in bloſſom, "ſtars, moonlight, ſhadows in ſtill water, and "the like, if too eagerly hunted, become ſhows "merely, and mock us with their unreality. "Go out of the houſe to ſee the moon, and 'tis

" mere tinſel, it will not pleaſe as when its " light ſhines upon your neceſſary journey."*

There is this, too, to be ſaid, that this habitual appreciation of nature on everyday occaſions may prevent your miſſing the very higheſt beauties; for what you go to ſee as a ſight, may never be ſhown to you under moſt favourable circumſtances; whereas a much inferior ſcene may be combined with ſuch accidental circumſtances of beauty as in reality to be the fineſt thing you will ever have an opportunity of beholding. We muſt not be altogether captivated by great names: the ſincere, clear-ſighted man is not; and has his reward for his independence of mind, in ſeeing many beauties in man and nature, which eſcape the perception of thoſe who ſee by book alone.

Before quitting the ſubject of travelling, I cannot help making a remark which has often occurred to me, but which, however, has regard, not ſo much to the travellers, as to thoſe they travel amongſt. It concerns all thoſe who preſide over coach-offices, diligence-offices,

* Emerſon. Nature—Chapter on Beauty of.

poſt-offices and cuſtom-houſes. What a fine opportunity ſuch people have, it ſeems to me, to manifeſt a Chriſtian temper. It is tireſome to you, O poſtmaſter, to be aſked all manner of queſtions, of which you cannot ſee the drift, or which you think you have anſwered in your firſt reply; but the poor enquirer is far from home; he has but a dim underſtanding of your language, ſtill dimmer of your cuſtoms; his little daughter is ill at home, perhaps; he wants to be aſſured by hearing again what you ſaid, even if he thought he underſtood the meaning at firſt: and you ſhould be good-natured and voluminous in your replies. Beſides, you muſt bethink yourſelf, that what is ſo ſimple to you as your daily tranſactions, may nevertheleſs be ſomewhat complicated, and hard to underſtand, eſpecially to a foreign mind. You might, I think, carry in your mind an imaginary affiche, which you ſhould ſee before you on the wall which fronts you as you addreſs your applicants.

ADVICE TO MEN IN SMALL AUTHORITY.

" It is a great privilege to have an opportu-
" nity many times in a day in the courſe of
" your buſineſs to do a real kindneſs which is
" not to be paid for. Graciouſneſs of demean-
" our is a large part of the duty of any official
" perſon who comes in contact with the world.
" Where a man's buſineſs is, there is the ground
" for his religion to manifeſt itſelf."

And we travellers, on our parts, if only from an anxiety to give other nations a good opinion of ours, ſhould beware of ſhowing inſolence, or impertinence, to thoſe who give us welcome. The relation of hoſt and gueſt ſhould never be quite effaced from the mind of either party.

CHAPTER XII.

I WANDERED about amongſt the young trees this morning, looking at their different ſhades of green, and I thought if they, drinking from the ſame ſoil and the ſame air, and ſtanding ſtill in the ſame ſpot, ſhowed ſuch infinite varieties, what might be expected from men. Then I thought of the anecdote of Charles V. in retirement, endeavouring in vain to make his watches keep time together, and the inference he drew therefrom, of the difficulty of making men think alike upon religious matters. Ah, when it once comes to thinking, good bye to anything like ſtrict agreement amongſt men.

But always amongſt my thoughts to-day came that of the death of Sir Robert Peel, which I heard of laſt night. Sad! ſad! ſuch a ſorry

death for ſo great a man—and, as we men ſhould ſay, ſo inopportune. I had hoped, as I have no doubt many others who take an intereſt in public affairs had done, that he would have remained as a great power aloof from party, a weight of private opinion, if we may ſay ſo, which ſhould come in at the moſt important times, to declare what is thought by the impartial byſtander, who, I ſhould ſay, (varying the common proverb) does not ſee moſt of the game, but ſees things which the players do not ſee. Then I thought of his ways, which had often amuſed me, and which I had learned to like; of his exquiſite adroitneſs; of the dignity of the man; of the humanity, and of what always ſtruck me ſo forcibly—of his amenability to good reaſoning, from whatever quarter it came.

Then I thought of what I am often meditating upon,—how the government of this country might be improved.

There is no doubt that our conſtitution is a great thing, the reſult of long ſtruggle and labour of all kinds; but ſtill how much its working might be amended; and it is to that amendment that the attention of thoughtful men

ought to be directed. Let us look at the matter frankly on all ſides.

It is a great advantage that affairs are long conſidered in this country.

It is a great advantage that ſcarcely any ſhade of opinion is without a hearing in the great aſſemblies of this country.

It is a great advantage that a number of perſons are exerciſed in public buſineſs; and that our proſperity and advancement do not depend on one man, or even on a few men.

It is a great advantage that grievances are ſure to be diſcuſſed.

On the other hand, let us honeſtly allow that it is a great evil, that the choice of men to fill the moſt important offices ſhould be chiefly limited to parliamentary men.

It is a great evil that honours and places ſhould be confined to them and theirs: why ſhould a man be made a peer becauſe he has failed in an election, or a baronet becauſe his vote is much wanted? Such things are too bad, and muſt be put a ſtop to.

It is a great evil that no good meaſures can be carried ſwiftly—ſo that remedies often come too late.

What an improvement it would be if peerages for life were permitted. It would, in my opinion, ſupply to the Houſe of Lords juſt that element of popular influence which is wanted.

And ſo, again, of official ſeats in the Houſe of Commons; what a benefit it would be if juſt men could be put there occaſionally, whom the world would be glad to liſten to, but whom a conſtituency will not liſten to, or who are not in a poſition to aſk it to liſten.

We muſt have many improvements in government. Queſtions are looming in the diſtance which will require the ableſt minds in the country. If we ever become more ſincere as individuals, we ſhall need to expreſs that ſincerity in political action.

It ſeems to me there is vaſt room for improvement in many branches of government—in finance, in colonization, in dealing with the poor, in the proceedings of the ſtate as regards religion. For, whatever ſome of us may think or wiſh, religious queſtions of high import will not long be in the back ground.

At preſent, the relations between people in power and the general intelligence of the country are not ſuch as they might be.

I know the difficulty of any ſound reforms in government; but if we never attempt any, they are ſure at ſome time to be attempted by the clumſieſt and coarſeſt mechaniſm.

The loſs of Sir Robert Peel is great indeed, I again exclaimed to myſelf, as I thought what an official reformer he might have been: not reckleſs to change or blame, inclined to give due conſideration to official perſons,—a claſs of men who amply deſerve it—and carrying out reforms, not in a ſpirit of condemnation, but of deſire for increaſed effectiveneſs and force. What a loſs in that man! I will go and talk to Dunsford, I ſaid, from whom one is always ſure of ſympathy and kindneſs.

Without delay I began to turn my ſteps towards his parſonage, making my way along the lanes with lofty hedges, enjoying the ſcent of the ſweet hawthorn, and eſcaping, as far as might be, an eaſt wind, which with a warm ſun made a moſt unpleaſant combination of weather; the eaſt wind, like ſome ſmall private vexation, rendering the reſt of one's proſperity not merely unpalatable, but ill-timed.

As I went along, I thought of the Church

of England and of what might be its future fortunes. I had juſt been reading the works of two brothers: laſt night I had finiſhed an elaborate attack from the Roman Catholic ſide upon the Anglican Church by one brother; and this morning I had read a very ſkilful attack upon all preſent religious ſyſtems by another brother. And I thought to myſelf, the Church of England ſuffers from both attacks.

One's acquaintances who meet one in the ſtreets, ſhrug their ſhoulders, and exclaim, "What a ſtate the Church is in! Oh that theſe queſtions that divide it had never been raiſed." I do not agree with them, and ſometimes I tell them ſo. If there are theſe great differences amongſt thoughtful men about great ſubjects, why ſhould they (the differences) be ſtifled? Are we always to be walking about as maſked figures?

No doubt it is a ſad thing that works of charity and mercy ſhould be ever interrupted by indefinite diſputes upon points which when once taken up, are with extreme difficulty ſettled well, or laid aſide. But then, on the other hand, how much good is prevented by the continuance of inſincerity, by an inſincere adhe-

rence on the part of men to that which they believe not. Beſides, it is not as if all went on ſmoothly now: how much, for inſtance, the cauſe of education ſuffers from the exiſtence of religious differences.

Moreover, who can tell the general miſchief produced in all human affairs by degrading views of religion, which more thought might enlarge or diſpel. Men's laws and cuſtoms are merely their religion applied to life. And, again, what a pity it would be if controverſy were abandoned to the weak or the controverſial only: ſo that, even for the ſake of peace, it may be good for a man not to ſuppreſs his thoughts upon religious ſubjects, if he has any.

For my own part, it has long appeared to me that our Church ſtands upon foundations which need more breadth and ſolidity, both as regards the hold it ought to have on the reaſon, and on the affection of its members.

As to the hold upon the reaſon: ſuppoſe we were taught to ſtudy ſcientifically, up to a certain point, ſomething that admitted of all the lights of ſtudy; and were then called upon to take the reſt for granted, not being allowed to uſe to the uttermoſt the lights of hiſtory and

criticiſm which had been admitted at firſt: how very inconcluſive the ſo-called concluſions would appear to us. It would be like placing a young foreſt tree in a hothouſe and ſaying, Grow ſo far, if you like, expand to the uttermoſt in this ſpace allowed to you, but there is no more room after you have attained theſe limits; thenceforward grow inwards, or downwards, or wither away. Our Church is too imperſonal, if I may uſe that expreſſion: it belongs too much to books, ſet creeds and articles, and not enough to living men; it does not admit eaſily of thoſe modifications which life requires, and which guard life by adapting it to what it has to bear.

Again, as regards affection, how can any but thoſe who are naturally devout and affectionate, which is not the largeſt claſs, have an affectionate regard for anything which preſents ſo cold and formal an appearance as the Church of England. The ſervices are too long; and, for the moſt part, are ſurrounded by the moſt proſaic circumſtances. Too many ſermons are preached; and yet, after all, too little is made of preaching. The preachers are apt to confine themſelves to certain topics, which, however

really great and ſolemn, are exhauſtible, at leaſt as far as men can tell us aught about them. Order, decency, cleanlineſs, propriety, and very often good ſenſe, are to be ſeen in full force in Anglican Churches once a week; but there is a deficiency of heartineſs.

The perfection to be aimed at, as it ſeems to me, and as I have ſaid before, would be a Church with a very ſimple creed, a very grand ritual, and a uſeful and devoted prieſthood. But theſe combinations are only in Utopias, Bleſſed Iſlands, and other fabulous places: no veſſel enters their ports, for they are as yet only in the minds of thoughtful men.

In forming ſuch an imaginary Church, there certainly are ſome things that might be adopted from the Roman Catholics. The other day I was at Rouen; I went to ſee the grand old Cathedral; the great weſtern doors were thrown wide open right upon the market-place filled with flowers, and, in the centre aiſle, not before any image, a poor woman and her child were praying. I was only there a few minutes, and theſe two figures remain impreſſed upon my mind. It is ſurely very good that the poor

ſhould have ſome place free from the reſtraints, the interruptions, the familiarity, and the ſqualîdneſs of home, where they may think a great thought, utter a lonely ſigh, a fervent prayer, an inward wail. And the rich need the ſame thing too.

Proteſtantiſm, when it ſhuts up its churches, or allows diſcreditable twopences to be paid at the door, cannot be ſaid to ſhow well in theſe matters. In becoming ſo nice and neat, it ſeems to have bruſhed away a great deal of meaning and uſefulneſs with the dirt and irregularity.

The great difficulty in reforming any church lies of courſe in the ignorance of its members. Moreover, there may be great indifference to any Church, or diſſatisfaction with it, amongſt its members; but then people ſay to themſelves, if we touch this or that thing which they diſapprove of, we do not know what harm we may not be doing to people of leſs inſight or leſs caution than ourſelves, and ſo they go on, content with a very rude attempt indeed at communion in ſpiritual matters, provided they do not, as they would ſay, unſettle their neighbours. There is ſomething good and humble in this; there is ſomething alſo of indifference:

if our anceſtors had always been content with ſilent proteſts againſt the things they diſapproved of, we might have been in a worſe poſition than we are now.

To lay down any guidance for action in this matter is very difficult indeed. According to the uſual courſe of human affairs, ſome criſis will probably occur, which nobody foreſees, and then men will be obliged to ſpeak and act boldly. It behoves them to bethink themſelves, from time to time, of whither they are tending in theſe all-important matters.

The intellectual energies of cultivated men want directing to the great queſtions. If there is doubt in any matter, ſhall we not examine? Inſtead of that, men ſhut their thoughts up, and pretend to be orthodox—play at being orthodox. Meanwhile, what an evil it muſt be to the Church, if through unneceſſary articles of faith, ſome of the beſt men are prevented from becoming clergymen, and many of the laity rendered leſs hearty members than they otherwiſe would be, of the Church.

Dwelling upon ſuch thoughts which are full of pain and anxiety, the thoughts of one who is always deſirous to make the beſt of anything

that is before him, and who is well aware how hard it is to reform anything from without, I reached Dunsford's quiet little parſonage.

I found my old friend ſitting in his garden in the very ſpot where I expected to find him, and for which I made my way without going through the houſe. In the middle of his kitchen-garden he has placed his bee-hives, and has ſurrounded them by a ſemicircle of juniper trees about five feet high. In front of the bee-hives is a garden-ſeat upon which I found him ſitting and reciting Latin poetry to himſelf, which I had no difficulty in diſcerning, though I could not hear the words, to be from his favourite author, Virgil. Elleſmere, who views everything in a droll ſarcaſtic way, ſays that our friend has choſen this particular ſeat in his garden from its being likely to be the place leaſt diſturbed by his ſiſter and his curate. Though very good people they are ſomewhat fuſſy and given to needleſs geſticulation which the bees diſlike, and occaſionally expreſs their diſlike in a very tangible manner. This ſpot, therefore, which is guarded by thouſands of little ſoldiers well-armed and well-equipped, diſtinguiſhed from their human prototypes by gaining ſup-

plies and not by waſting them, affords a very ſecure retreat for our friend where he can talk Virgil to himſelf for half an hour on a ſunny morning.

It was not altogether without trepidation that I took my ſeat by his ſide amidſt innumerable buzzings and whizzings; but he aſſured me with a ſmile that the bees would not hurt me, and in a minute or two their preſence was only like a murmur of the diſtant wind through the trees.

I began at once to narrate to Dunsford the melancholy circumſtances of Sir Robert Peel's death which he had not heard of before, and which affected him deeply. Naturally his emotion increaſed my own. After I had told him the ſad ſtory, and anſwered his various queſtions about it, we remained ſilent for a time. I looked at the bees and thought of Manchester and other of the great hives and marts of induſtry: Dunsford went on with his Virgil: at laſt we thus reſumed our dialogue.

Dunsford. I do not wonder, my dear Leonard, that you were much affected by Sir Robert's death. I always felt how much you ought to ſympathize with him. Indeed there are two

or three minor points in which you often put me a little in mind of him.

Milverton. It is ſtrange I never heard you ſay ſo.

Dunsford. I did not think you much admired him, or would feel pleaſed at being likened to him in anything. But this is what I mean—it always appeared to me, that he had the moſt peculiar appreciation of the irrationality and difficulty to manage, of mankind. This was one of the things which made him ſo cautious. He never threw out his views or opinions till the moment when they were to be expreſſed in action. He did not want to provoke needleſs oppoſition. In ſhort it was clear that he had the keeneſt apprehenſion of the folly of the world: he was very obſtinate withal, or, as I had better ſay, reſolved; and very ſenſitive. He did nothing under the hope that it would paſs eaſily, and coſt him nothing to do; and yet, at the ſame time, though he foreſaw diſtinctly oppoſition and unreaſon and calumny, he felt them more perhaps than quite beſeemed ſo wiſe and reſolute a man when they did come. You beſt know whether I am right in attributing ſome of the ſame ſtrength and ſome of the ſame weakneſs to the man who ſits beſide me.

Milverton. I neither admit, nor deny; but ſurely, Dunsford, it is not unwiſe nor imprudent to expect to have every degree of irrationality to battle with in any thing one may undertake; and time is ſeldom loſt in preparing to meet that irrationality; or ſtrength, in keeping one's projects long before one. This is not merely worldly wiſdom; ſuch conduct reſults from a deep care for the ſucceſs of the project itſelf.

Dunsford. Much of it is the reſult of temperament; and temperament is a part of our nature ſooner developed than almoſt any other. How ſoon you ſee it in children, and how deciſively marked.

Milverton. I cannot help thinking what a ſhrewd man you are, Dunsford, when you chooſe to be ſo. It is you who ought to conduct great law-caſes, and write eſſays, inſtead of leaving ſuch things to Elleſmere and myſelf, and pretending that you are the ſimple, unworldly, retired man, content to receive your impreſſions of men and things from your pupils. I ſuppoſe that watching theſe bees, gives you a great inſight into the management of ſtates and the conduct of individuals. You recite Virgil

to them, and they buzz into your ears bee-wiſdom of the moſt refined kind.

Dunsford. Talking of eſſays, may I aſk, Mr. Milverton, what you are about? You have not been near me for ſome time, and I always conſtrue your abſence into ſome new work.

Milverton. You are right in this caſe, but I moſtly avoid talking about what I am doing, at leaſt till it is in ſome ſtate of forwardneſs. Talking prevents doing. Silence is the great fellow-workman.

Dunsford. The bees?

Milverton. They buzz when they come home: they are ſilent enough at their work. Moreover, I am beginning to care leſs and leſs about criticiſm during the progreſs of work, fearing leſs you ſee, Dunsford, the irrationality of the world; for what you mainly aim to get at by liſtening to criticiſm is not ſo much what will be underſtood, as what will be miſunderſtood — and that miſunderſtanding ariſes ſometimes from your own error in thought, ſometimes from bungling workmanſhip, ſometimes from the irrationality of mankind; or from ſome unfortunate combination of theſe vaſious ſources of error. My growing indifference to

criticiſm, in fact the reaſon why my ſteps have not been bent ſo often lately in the direction of the Rectory, I would have you to believe reſults, not from any increaſing confidence in my own workmanſhip, but from my growing faith in the general rationality and kindlineſs of mankind.

Dunsford. Humph!

Milverton. Beſides my endeavours and aſpirations are ſo humble—

Dunsford. Humph!

Milverton. You will agree with me when you ſee what I mean. They are ſo humble that they do not require all that adverſe criticiſm and conſequent moulding which more elaborate ſchemes might do. For inſtance, I believe in the indefinite improveability of ourſelves and of every thing around us. Do not be frightened, and look up ſo ſtrangely, Dunsford: I do not mean perfectibility. Now, if by way of carrying out this belief of mine, I had any ſcheme of ſocial regeneration, in which every thing and everybody was to be put in his, or its right place, of courſe it would have been neceſſary for me to have come very often over to the Rectory, to drink in ſound wiſdom in the

way of all kinds of comment, objection, and elaboration, from you and Lucy and theſe wiſe bees.

Dunsford. I declare, Milverton, when Elleſmere is not with us, you play both his part and your own; but go on.

Milverton. No — but, ſeriouſly, my dear Dunsford, to go on with my ſchemes of improveability, I aſſure you they are on a very humble baſis. Looking around I ſee what ſlight things are often the real hindrances to the beſt endeavours of men. I would aim to take theſe hindrances out of a man's path. Mark you, I do not expect that he will therefore become a greater man, but he will certainly be able to act more like one. To deſcend to particulars, why I delight ſo much in ſanatory reform is not ſo much in the thing itſelf, if I may ſay ſo, as in the additional power and freedom it gives to mankind. I do not know what ſocial arrangements will be good for the coming generation, what churches will be beſt for them, what forms of legiſlation; but I am ſure that in whatever they do, they will be entangled with fewer difficulties, and will act more healthfully and wiſely, if they are healthy men themſelves.

Dunsford. Good doctrine, I think.

Milverton. In the same way I would seek to remove all manner of social disabilities, always again with a view to the future, that the removal of these disabilities may give room for more freedom of thought and action.

Dunsford. I do not quite understand this, but do not wait to explain: go on.

Milverton. It is for the same reasons that I delight in education (and you know that I do not mean a small thing by education) because of its enabling powers, to use a legislative phrase. Here again I do not pretend to see what will become of people when educated, or to suggest the forms that such discipline will ultimately lead them into; but I cannot but believe that it will make any people into material more malleable in the hands of the wise and good—of those who should be, and who, to a certain extent are, the leaders of each generation. Indeed, I believe that always as men become greater, they are more easy to deal with.

Dunsford. I begin to see what you would be at.

Milverton. I conceive that as civilization advances, a thousand little complexities arise with it. To untie them in any way may be a

humble effort, but ſeems to me a moſt needful one. What we are ever wanting is to give freedom without licenſe: to free a man from mean conformity——

Dunsford. By making him conform to ſomething higher. I think, Milverton, I have aſſiſted in pointing this out to you when I was afraid that you were making too much war upon conformity.

Milverton. It is only one of many things, my dear friend, which I have learned from you.

Dunsford. Thank you, my dear Leonard. I muſt ſay you have always been moſt willing to give more than due heed to anything your old tutor has ſaid, with the exception of the advice he uſed to tender to you at college about getting up certain problems in the Differential and Integral Calculus.

Milverton. And I wiſh I had liſtened to that advice alſo.

Dunsford. But are you not a little afraid, my friend, (not that I would ſay one word againſt any good purpoſe you may have) that with all your imaginary cultivation and enabling men to act more freely and wiſely by the removal of ſmall diſabilities, which yet I admit may be

great hindrances: are you not afraid, that after all we ſhall advance into ſomething very tireſome, ſomewhat of a dead level, which obſervers even now ſay is very viſible in the world—no great man, but a number of decent, ordinary, cultivated, common-place perſons? I believe I am now talking Elleſmere to you; for, in reality, I prefer the advancement of the great maſs of mankind to any pre-eminence of a few: but ſtill I ſhould like to hear what you have to ſay to this objection.

Milverton. I am delighted that you have raiſed it. I ſuſpect there is a great deluſion in this matter. The notion that there is a dead level in modern times is a miſtake: *it is only that there are more eminences.* Formerly, one claſs or kind of men made a noiſe in the world, or at leaſt made the chief noiſe; and, looking acroſs the hazy diſtances of time, we are deluded by great names. An Alexander, a Timour the Tartar, an Attila, a Charlemagne, loom large in the diſtance. There were not ſo many ways to pre-eminence then—added to which, I ſhould be very ſlow to connect greatneſs of thought, or greatneſs of nature, with reſounding deeds.

Dunsford. Surely, at the latter end of the 15th, and in the 16th century, there were unrivalled great men—a galaxy of them.

Milverton. Yes, I admit; and no man looks up to ſome of the perſonages of that era with more reverence and regard than I do: and, moreover, I would not contend that there may not be an occaſional galaxy, as you have termed it, of ſuch men. But all I have to contend againſt is, that the tendency of modern cultivation is not neceſſarily to bring men to a dead level, and to ſubdue all real greatneſs.

Dunsford. But you muſt admit that there is a certain ſmallneſs in the men of our time, and a fooliſh hurry in their proceedings.

Milverton. No: that is not exactly what we have reaſon to complain of, but rather a certain coldneſs, an undue care for reſpectability, and too much deſire to be ſafe. One of our moſt obſervant men, who has ſeen a great deal of the world, and always deſired to underſtand the generation under him as well as that which came before him, ſays, that the young men of the preſent day are better than the young men of his time; but there is one thing that he complains of in them, and that is, their fear

of ridicule. To a certain extent he is right, I think; only I ſhould modify his remark a little, and ſay, that it is not exactly that they fear ridicule, as that they diſlike to put themſelves in a poſition that may juſtly be made ridiculous. It is partly caution, partly faſtidiouſneſs, partly a fear of ridicule.

Dunsford. Well, then, I think that each man is more iſolated than he uſed to be. There is leſs of clanſhip, leſs of the rallying round men of force or genius. How very rare a thing it is for one man to devote himſelf to the purpoſes framed by another's mind, or to give evidence of ſomething like devotion to his perſon. Yet this would often be the wiſeſt and the nobleſt form of exertion.

Milverton. But then there would be no originality, as they think, and there is now a diſeaſed deſire for originality, which is never to be got by the men who ſeek it. All the while the moſt original thing would be to be humble and ſubſervient to great purpoſes, from whomſoever adopted.

At the ſame time, I muſt ſay that, as far as I have obſerved, the young would be very devoted to forward the purpoſes of their elders

and ſuperiors, whether in parliament, in offices, or in any other functions of civil life: and I think that in our times, great fault has often been on the ſide of the elders in not making juſt uſe of the young talent lying everywhere about them.

Dunsford. That may be.

Milverton. Indeed, Dunsford, it is not every one who, like yourſelf, is anxious to elicit the powers, and to carry forward the purpoſes, of younger men. It requires a great deal of kind-hearted imagination to do that.

Dunsford. You make too much of this, Milverton. It is natural that I ſhould care about my own pupils more than anything elſe. I live in their doings.

Milverton. And in your new edition, that is to be, of the Second part of Algebra, as Ellesmere would ſay, if he were here: but, to return to our ſubject, I will tell you, at leaſt I will try and tell you, in a ſomewhat fanciful way, what I think of the whole matter.

Have you ever known well a beautiful bit of natural ſcenery, before man has come to ſettle in it, a cliff near the ſea, a mead near a lake, or the outſkirts of a noble foreſt? If ſo, you recollect the delicately-rounded, gracefully in-

dented, or groteſquely out-jutting forms, which the rock, or the hill, or the margin of the waters, or the outſkirts of the wood had taken—forms dear to the painter and the poet. (Here Lucy entered the encloſure where we were ſitting.)

Lucy. The painter and the poet—I am ſure this is ſomething which I may liſten to, Mr. Milverton; may I not?

Milverton. There are few perſons, Lucy, who have more feeling for the works of painters and poets; and ſo you have a right to hear anything that is to be ſaid about them. (I then repeated to her the former part of the ſentence.) You then, perhaps, after an interval of many years, paſs by the ſame place. A number of ſquare white houſes, poor in form and queſtionable in deſign, deform the beautiful ſpot. The delicate impreſſions of nature are gone, and, in their ſtead, are the angular marks of men's handy-work. The painter hurries by the place; the poet, too, unleſs he is a very philoſophic one, paſſes ſhuddering by. But, in reality, what forms of beauty, in conduct, in ſuffering, in endeavour; what tragedies, what romances; what foot-prints, as it were, angelic

and demoniac—now belong to that ſpot. It is true, we have loſt wonderful lichens and thoſe exquiſitely-coloured moſſes on the rocks which were the delight of the artiſt. Perhaps there are now ungainly initials in their place, illuſtrative however of a deeper poetry than ever was there before. But I grow too fanciful, and muſt deſcend to proſaic explanations. I mean, in ſhort, that though there is more cultivation (which, it muſt be confeſſed, effaces ſomewhat of the natural rugged beauty of the ſcene), there is alſo more of a higher beauty which ſits beſide the other (plain proſaic cultivation) always, though oft unkenned by mortal eyes. So, in the advancement of mankind, the great barbaric outlines are broken into, and defaced; but a thouſand new beauties, new delicacies, even new greatneſſes, take their place. Nature is ever affluent in ſuch things; and this effect of cultivation is to be ſeen, not only in mankind, but in individual men. For inſtance, Dunsford, the very ſhyneſs and coldneſs of modern youth ariſes in ſome meaſure from the growth of tact and delicacy. But I need not explain further: you ſee what I mean.

Dunsford. I think I do; and, as it is a charitable view, I wiſh to think it a true one. But I could object to your metaphor, if I choſe to do ſo.

Lucy. And is it equally true, Mr. Milverton, with the young ladies as with the young gentlemen?

Milverton. Why, my dear Lucy, the young ladies are always of courſe more in harmony with nature. Though women are more ſlaviſh to ſmall conventionalities than men, the real advance of civilization tells much leſs upon women than upon men. One, who knew them well, ſays that "The ideas of juſtice, of virtue, of vice, of goodneſs, of wickedneſs, float only on the ſurface of their ſouls (conſequently the prevailing ideas amongſt men on theſe ſubjects make comparatively little impreſſion upon women), in the depths of which (their ſouls) they have 'l'amour propre et l'intérêt perſonnel' (I quote his very words) with all the energy of nature; and, more civiliſed than ourſelves from without, they have remained true ſavages within; (plus civiliſées que nous en dehors, elles ſont reſtées de vraies ſauvages en dedans)."

Lucy. The man is a ſavage himſelf: he muſt be a French Mr. Elleſmere.

Milverton. They are daring words, certainly; but perhaps they have a ſcintilla of truth in them. However, I will come again ſome day, and endeavour to elucidate theſe things a little further. Now I ſee the bees are flocking homewards with well-laden thighs, and I, too, muſt go back to my hive, well laden with the wiſdom to be gained from the thoughtful trees and beautiful flowers of the Rectory.

Dunsford.

" At feſſæ multâ referunt ſe nocte minores,
" Crura thymo plenæ: paſcuntur et arbuta paſſim,
" Et glaucas ſalices, caſiamque crocumque rubentem,
" Et pinguem tiliam, et ferrugineos hyacinthos.
" Omnibus una quies operum, labor omnibus unus."

Milverton. Now, Miſs Lucy, you muſt tranſlate. I know you do that with all your uncle's favourite bits: and to tell the truth, I I have forgotten ſome of the words. What is tilia?

Lucy. You muſt not be very critical then, if I do tranſlate, and aſk for every word to be rendered.

Now homewards come, borne on the evening breeze,
With heavy-laden thighs, the younger bees:
Each in the arbutus has hid his head,
In yellow willow-bloom, in crocus red,
And the rich foliage which the lindens ſpread;
One common labour each companion knows,
And for the weary ſwarm is one repoſe.

Milverton. A little liberal, Lucy, but it gives ſome of the ſenſe of the paſſage, I think; and you are a good girl for not making more fuſs about letting me hear it. I really muſt go now; ſo good bye.

And ſo I walked homewards, thinking much of Dunsford's mild wiſdom, and how beautiful it is to ſee old age gracefully filling its high vocation of a continually-enlarging ſympathy with the young, and tolerance for them. As Goethe ſays, "A man has only to become old to be tolerant; I ſee no fault committed," he adds, "which I alſo might not have committed." But then it is a Goethe who is ſpeaking. Dunsford has reached to the ſame level of toleration by ſheer goodneſs of nature.

CHAPTER XIII.

ALONG, ſolitary ride enabled me to-day to bring to a concluſion a chapter which I had been thinking of for ſome time. It is difficult for a man, unleſs he is a perfect horſeman, to think connectedly during a ride, which is the very reaſon why horſe-exerciſe is ſo good for the ſtudious and the buſy; but the inſpiriting nature of the exerciſe may enable the rider to overcome ſpecial points of difficulty in any ſubject he is thinking over. In truth, a ſubject of any magnitude requires to be thought over in all moods of mind; and that alone is one great reaſon for maintaining thoughts long in mind, before expreſſing them in ſpeech or writing, that they come to be conſidered and reconſidered under all aſpects, and to be modi-

fied by the various fortunes and ſtates of temperament of the thinker.

There is all the difference between the thoughts of a man who is plodding homewards on his own legs, under an umbrella, and thoſe of the ſame man who, on horſeback, is ſpringing over the elaſtic turf, careleſs whether wind or rain drives againſt him or not, that there was between the after-dinner and the next morning councils of the ancient Germans.

And, indeed, the ſubject I was thinking of, needs to be conſidered in all weathers of the ſoul, for it is very large, and if I could preſent to other minds what comes under this ſubject in mine, I ſhould have ſaid a good deal of all that I may have to ſay on moſt ſubjects.

Without more introductory words, for a long introduction would be eſpecially out of place in this caſe, the ſubject in queſtion is the art of coming to an end.

Almoſt all human affairs are tedious. Everything is too long. Viſits, dinners, concerts, plays, ſpeeches, pleadings, eſſays, ſermons, are too long. Pleaſure and buſineſs labour equally under this defect, or, as I ſhould rather ſay, this fatal ſuperabundance.

It muſt not be ſuppoſed that tireſomeneſs belongs to virtue alone. Few people are more pedantic and tireſome than the vicious; and I doubt whether if one were thrown on a deſert iſland, and had only the means of reſcuing Blair's works and many fictions of decidedly bad tendency, but thought to be amuſing, one would not exclaim "Blair for ever," and hurl the fictions into their element, the water.

But let us trace this lengthineſs, not only in the reſults of men's works, but in their modes of operation.

Which, of all defects, has been the one moſt fatal to a good ſtyle? The not knowing when to come to an end. Take ſome inferior writer's works. Diſmiſs nearly all the adjectives; when he uſes many ſubſtantives, either in juxtapoſition, or in ſome dependence on each other, reduce him to one; do the ſame thing with the verbs; finally, omit all the adverbs: and you will, perhaps, find out that this writer had ſomething to ſay, which you might never have diſcovered, if you had not removed the ſuperfluous words. Indeed, in thinking of the kind of writing that is needed, I am reminded of a ſtanza

in a wild Arab ſong, which runs thus,

> Terrible he rode alone,
> With his Yemen ſword for aid;
> Ornament it carried none,
> But the notches on the blade.*

So, in the beſt writing, only that is ornament which ſhows ſome ſervice done, which has ſome dint of thought about it.

Then there is a whole claſs of things which, though good in themſelves, are, often, entirely ſpoilt by being carried out too far and inopportunely. Such are punctiliouſneſs, neatneſs, order, labour of finiſh, and even accuracy. The man who does not know how to leave off, will make accuracy frivolous and vexatious. And ſo with all the reſt of theſe good things, people often perſevere with them ſo inaptly and ſo inopportunely as to contravene all their real merits. Such people put me in mind of plants which, belonging to one country and having been brought to another, perſiſt in flowering in thoſe months in which they, or

* See Tait's Magazine, July, 1850, for what ſeems to be an admirable tranſlation of a moſt remarkable poem "of an age earlier than that of Mahomet."

their anceſtors, were uſed to flower in the old country. There is one in a garden near me which in February delights to ſhow the ſame gay colours for a day or two here, in theſe northern climes, with which it was wont to indulge the far-off inhabitants of countries near the Black Sea. It is in vain that I have remonſtrated with this precocious ſhrub about its ſhowing its good qualities at ſo inappropriate a period; and in fact it can make ſo good an anſwer to any man who thus addreſſes it, that, perhaps, it is better to ſay nothing and paſs by, thinking only of our own faults in this reſpect —and then, indeed, the ſhrub will not have flowered quite in vain, if it has been only for a ſingle day.

A ſimilar error in not knowing when to leave off occurs in the exerciſe of the critical faculty, which ſome men uſe till they have deadened the creative: and, in like manner, men cavil and diſſect and diſpute till that which was merely meant as a means of diſcovering error and baffling falſe ſtatement, becomes the only end they care about—the truth for them.

But a far more important field for this error

of ſuperabundance, is in the vices of mankind. If men had but known when to leave off, what would have become of ambition, avarice, gluttony, quarrelling, cruelty. Men go on conquering for conquering's ſake, as they do hoarding for hoarding's ſake. If it be true that Marlborough went on gaining needleſs victories, waſting uncalled-for blood and treaſure, what a contemptible thing it is! I ſay, "if" he did ſo, for but a little inveſtigation into hiſtory ſhows one how grievouſly men have been miſrepreſented, and, not having looked into the matter, I will not take the reſponſibility of the accuſation on myſelf. But the inſtance, if juſt, is an apt one; and, certainly, there are many ſimilar inſtances in great commanders to bear it out. But what a contemptible application of talent it is, that a man ſhould go on doing ſomething very well which is not wanted, and ſhould make work for himſelf that he may ſhine or at leaſt be occupied. It is abſolutely childiſh. Such children have great conquerors been.

It is a grand thing for a man to know when he has done his work. How majeſtic, for inſtance, is the retirement of Sylla, Diocletian and Charles the Fifth. Theſe men may not

afford particularly ſpotleſs inſtances, but we muſt make the moſt of thoſe we have. There are very few men who know how to quit any great office, or to diveſt themſelves of any robe of power.

How much, again, this error of not knowing when to leave off, pervades the various purſuits of men. How it is to be ſeen in art and literature; how much too in various profeſſions and various crafts. The end is loſt ſight of in a fooliſh exerciſe of ſome facility in dealing with the means; as when a man goes on writing for writing's ſake, having nothing more to tell us; or when a man who exerciſes ſome craft moderately well for the ſake of gain, confines himſelf to that craft and is a craftſman nowhere elſe, when the gain is no longer needful for him.

But it may be ſaid, why ſpeak of the art of leaving off: the inſtances you have given might ſometimes be put under the head of not knowing how to begin; or, at any rate, they might more legitimately come under the heads of the various evil paſſions and habits to which they ſeem to belong. I do not altogether deny this,

but at the ſame time I wiſh to ſhow that there is an art of leaving off which may be exerciſed independently, if I may ſo expreſs it, of the various affections of the mind.

This art will depend greatly upon a juſt appreciation of form and proportion. Where this proportion is wanting in men's thoughts or lives, they become one-ſided. The mind enters into a peculiar ſlavery, and hardens into a creature of mere habits and cuſtoms. The comparative youthfulneſs of men of genius, which has often been noticed, reſults from their finer ſenſe of proportion than that of other men, which prevents their being enſlaved by the things which gradually cloſe up the avenues of the ſoul. They, on the contrary, hold to Nature till the laſt, and would partake, in ſome meaſure, if it may be ſo, of her univerſality.

I hardly know anything that ſerves to give us a greater notion of the importance of proportion than the fact made known to us by chymiſtry, that but a few elements mingled together in different proportions give things of the moſt different nature (as we ſuppoſe) and different efficiency. This fact, after a conſideration of the infinitely great as appreciated by

the teleſcope, and the infinitely ſmall as divulged by the microſcope, is to my mind the moſt ſignificant in phyſics.

I fear, without more explanation, I ſhall hardly make myſelf underſtood here. I mean that this fact in chymiſtry affords a high idea of the importance of proportion; and the error we have been conſidering is one that mainly ariſes from diſproportion.

For inſtance, this want of power to leave off often ſhows an inadequate perception of the proportion which all our proceedings here ought to bear to time. Everything is a function of time, as the mathematicians would well expreſs it. Then only conſider what needful demands there are on that time: what forms, compliments, civilities, offices of friendſhip, relationſhip and duty, have to be tranſacted. Conſider the interruptions of life. I have often thought how hardly theſe bear upon the beſt and moſt capable of men. Perhaps there are not many more than a thouſand perſons in the long roll of men who have done anything very great for mankind. Nations ſhould have kept guard at their doors, as we fancy, that they might work undiſturbed; but inſtead of that, domeſtic miſery,

poverty, error and affliction of all kinds no doubt diſturbed and diſtracted them—not without its enlightenment, and not perhaps to be wholly regretted for their ſakes. But has any one thing ſo miſled them and counteracted their abilities ſo much as this want of proportion I am ſpeaking of, ariſing from their ignorance or inability to leave off, which has limited their efforts to one thing, has made the warrior a warrior only, incapable of dealing with his conqueſts, the ſtateſman a man of buſineſs and devices only, ſo that he gains power but cannot govern, the man of letters a maſter of phraſes only, the man of ſo-called ſcience a man, like the Greek philoſophers, who could only talk about ſcience, ſkilful in that but never having left off that talking to make a ſingle experiment.

But ſurely there might be a breadth of purpoſe and extent of purſuit without inane verſatility. As things are, it is not often that you find any one who holds his art, accompliſhment, function, or buſineſs, in an eaſy diſengaged way, like a true gentleman, ſo that he can bear criticiſm upon his doings in it nobly or indifferently, who is other than a kind of pedagogue. Much more difficult is it to find a man who

ſees the work before him in its juſt proportions and does it, yet does not make out of his work an obſtacle to his perception of what beſides is good and needful; and who keeps the avenues of his mind open to influences other than thoſe which immediately ſurround him.

I am aſhamed when I think of the want of cultivation even in thoſe who are reckoned moſt cultivated people; and not ſo much of their want of cultivation, as their want of the power of continuous cultivation. Few, therefore can endure leiſure, or in fact can carry other burthens than thoſe which they have been uſed to — like mules accuſtomed to carry panniers or packſaddles in mountainous countries, which ſteer their way when free from their burthens juſt as if they ſtill bore them, allowing always the diſtance between the rocks and themſelves which was neceſſary to clear their loaded panniers, a mode of proceeding which exceedingly alarms and aſtoniſhes the traveller mounted on theſe mules till he underſtands the reaſon of it. Both men and mules are puzzled at having ſomething new to undertake: and indeed the art of leaving off judiciouſly is but the art of beginning ſomething elſe which needs to be done.

But if there is anything in which the beauty and the wiſdom of knowing when to leave off is particularly manifeſted, it is in behaviour. And how rare is beautiful behaviour, greatly by reaſon of the want of due proportion in the characters and objects of moſt perſons, and from their want of ſome perception of the whole of things. Let any man run over in his mind the circle of his friends and acquaintances, alſo, if he is a well-read man, of thoſe whom he has become acquainted with in hiſtory or biography; and he will own how few are, or have been, perſons of beautiful behaviour, of real greatneſs of mind.

This greatneſs of mind which ſhows itſelf daily in behaviour, and alſo in conduct when you take the whole of a life, may coexiſt with foibles, with ſtains, with perverſities, with ignorance, with ſhort-comings of any and of every kind. But there is one thing which is characteriſtic of it, and that is, its freedom from limitation. No one purſuit, end, aim, or occupation permanently ſullies its perceptions. It may be wicked for a time as David, cruel for a time as Cæſar, even falſe; but theſe are

only paſſing forms of mind; and there is ſtill room for virtue, piety, ſelf-reſtraint and clemency. Its intelligence is not a mirror obedient to private impulſes that reflects only that which its will commands for the time; but gives candidly ſome reflection of all that paſſes by. Hence, by God's bleſſing, it will know how to leave off; whereas, on the contrary, the mind which is hedged in by the circumſtances and ideas of one paſſion, or purſuit, is painfully limited, be that paſſion or purſuit what it may.

Obſerve the calmneſs of great men, noting by the way that real greatneſs belongs to no ſtation and no ſet of circumſtances. This calmneſs is the cauſe of their beautiful behaviour. Vanity, injuſtice, intemperance, are all ſmallneſſes ariſing from a blindneſs to proportion in the vain, the unjuſt, and the intemperate. Whereas, no one thing, unleſs it be the love of God, has ſuch a continuous hold on a great mind as to ſeem all in all to it. The great know, unconſciouſly, more of the real beneficent ſecret of the world: there is occaſional repoſe of ſoul for them. How can ſuch men be ſubdued by money, be encloſed by the ideas of a

party, or a faction, be ſo ſhut up in a profeſſion, an art, or a calling, as to ſee naught elſe, or to believe only in one form of expreſſion for what is beautiful and good.

Paſſing by a mountain ſtream, I once beheld an unfortunate trunk of a tree, which, having been ſhot down the ſide of a hill and thus ſent on, as the cuſtom is in thoſe countries, down the ſtream to find its way to the haven, had unfortunately come too near a ſtrong eddy, which caught it up and ever whirled it back again. How like the general courſe of man! I thought. Down came the log with apparent vigour and intent each time, and it ſeemed certain that it would drive onwards in the courſe deſigned for it; but each time it ſwirled round and was ſent back again. Ever and anon it came with greater force, deſcribed a wider arc, and ſurely now, I thought, it will ſhoot down on its way: but no, it pauſed for a moment, felt the influence of its fatal eddy, and then returned with the like force it had come down with. I waited and waited, groups of holiday-making people paſſed by me, wondering, I dare ſay, what I ſtayed there to ſee; but unmindful of any of us, it went on performing its circles.

I returned in the evening; the poor log was ſtill there, buſy as ever in not going onwards; and I went upon my journey, feeling very melancholy for this tree, and thinking there was little hope for it. It may even now be at its vain gyrations, knowing no reſt, and yet making no advance to the ſeas for which it was deſtined.

So let it not be with us: caught up by no mean eddies which draw us to the ſide of the ſtream and compel us to revolve in the ſame narrow circlet of paſſion, of prejudice, of party, of ambition, of deſire; finding in conſtancy no limitation, in devotedneſs of purſuit no narrowneſs of heart, or thought, or creed; chooſing as the highway of our career one which widens and deepens ever as we move along it; let us float on to that unmeaſured ocean of thought and endeavour where the truly great in ſoul (often great becauſe humble, for it is the pride of man which keeps him to ſmall purpoſes and prevents his knowing when to leave off with earthly things) where the truly and the ſimply great ſhall find themſelves in kindred waters of far other depth than thoſe which they were firſt launched out upon.

After writing down the foregoing thoughts upon the art of coming to an end, which had been the ſubject of my morning's ride, I went out upon the lawn to refreſh myſelf with the evening air. It was very clear: the ſtars and the moon were in all their ſplendour; and the ſhadows of the trees lay quietly upon the graſs, as if the leaves, for the moſt part ſo reſtleſs, were now ſleeping on their ſtems, like the birds upon the branches.

I had reſolved that this reverie, a fitting one to conclude with, ſhould be the laſt of which I would give an account. There is ſomething ſad about the end of anything, whether it be the building of a palace, the conſtruction of a great hiſtory, like that of Gibbon, the finiſhing of a child's baby-houſe, or the concluſion of ſome ſmall, unpretending work in literature. The firſt feelings of an author ſoon paſs by. Thoſe hopes and thoſe fears which quite agitate the young pretender to fame, are equally dulled by failure or ſucceſs. Meanwhile, the reſponſibility of writing does not grow leſs, at leaſt in any thoughtful mind. With the little knowledge we have on any ſubject, how we muſter audacity to write upon it, I hardly know.

Theſe ſigns, too, that we uſe for communicating our thoughts, which we call language, what a ſtrange debris it is of the old languages —a reſult of the manifold corruptions of childiſh prattle, of the uncouth talk of ſoldiers ſent into conquered provinces, of the vain efforts of rude huſbandmen to catch an unfamiliar tongue. And, if we went back to the old languages, with equal knowledge of their antecedents, we ſhould probably find that they alſo were lamentable gatherings from forgotten tongues, huts out of the ruins of palaces.

So much for the vehicle in which we convey our thoughts, imperfect enough in themſelves.

Then, if we turn to the people, the manners, the cuſtoms and the laws we have to act upon with theſe thoughts, there, too, what a maſs of confuſion is preſented to us, collected from all parts of the earth and from all periods of hiſtory.

As I thought of this, I ſeemed to ſee the various races who had occupied this very ſpot flit by—Briton, Roman, Saxon, Norman, each with his laws, manners and cuſtoms imprinted on his bearing, the wrecks of mighty empires ſhown in the very accoutrements of each ſha-

dowy form as it went by. And this maſs of ſtrangely-mingled materials is the ſubſtance that theſe imperfect thoughts expreſſed in imperfect language have to act upon.

And, then, what ſay theſe ſtars with their all-eloquent ſilence ſeeming to reduce all our ſchemes into nothings, to make our ſhort-lived perplexities ludicrous, ourſelves and our ways like a ſong that is not ſung? What a cold reply they ſeem to give to all human works and queſtionings.

But, ſaid I to myſelf, ſuch trains of thought may eaſily be purſued too far; we muſt not bring in the immenſities about us and within us to cruſh our endeavours. Here we are; let ſtars, or bygone times, or the wrecks of nations, or the corruptions of language, ſay or ſhow what they will. There is ſomething alſo to be done by us: we have our little portions of the reef of coral yet to build up. If we have not time to become wiſe, we have time enough to become reſigned. If we have rude and confuſed material to work upon, and uncouth implements to work with, leſs muſt be required

from us; and, as for theſe ſtars, the true meaning to be got from them is in reality an encouraging one.

Some men have thought that one ſtar or planet befriended them; ſome, another. This man grew joyful when the aſcendant ſtar of his nativity came into conjunction with Jupiter, favourable to his deſtinies; and that man grew pale when his planet came into oppoſition with Saturn, noxious to his horoſcope, threatening the "Houſe of Life." Nor is aſtrology extinct: ſcience only lends it more meaning, but not a private one for kings or potentates. Theſe ſtars ſay ſomething very ſignificant to all of us: and each man has the whole hemiſphere of them, if he will but look up, to counſel and befriend him. In the morning time, they come not within ken, when they would too much abſorb our attention and hinder our neceſſary buſineſs, but in the evening, they appear to us, to chaſten over-perſonal thoughts, to put down what is exorbitant in earth-bred fancies, and to encourage thoſe endeavours and aſpirations which meet with no full reſponſe from any ſingle planet, certainly not from the one we are on, but which derive their meaning and their end

from the vaſtneſs and the harmony of the whole of God-directed nature and of life.

So thinking, I was enabled for a moment to ſee, or rather to feel, that the threads of our poor human affairs, tangled as they ſeem to be, might yet be interwoven harmoniouſly with the great cords of love and duty that bind the univerſe together. And ſo I returned to the houſe, and ſaid, Good night, cheerfully to the friendly ſtars, which did not now ſeem to oppreſs me by their magnitude, or their multitude, or their diſtance.

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Companions of my solitude.

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